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PROBLEMS OF THE FAMILY

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The Century Social Science Series

PROBLEMS OF THE FAMILY

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BY

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INTRODUCTION

Within the last thirty years there has sprung up a vital and growing interest in the institution of the family and its functioning in modern civilization. This widespread concern about the workings of marriage and the family is noteworthy in that it indicates a more or less complete abandonment of the age-old taboo upon any critical investigation in the field of sex relations, or even of any open discussion of these questions. A generation ago the frank consideration of such problems as freedom for the woman in marriage, education of young people in sex matters, birth control, divorce, and a score of other moot questions would have condemned the men and women who attempted it to sharp social disapproval. Yet, even then, the wisdom of maintaining the ancient ban was questioned by a few daring spirits in Europe. As early as 1892, Mrs. Havelock Ellis was delivering addresses in England which openly attacked specific evils in the marriage relation and even advocated a "novitiate for marriage"—a proposal that must have chilled the souls of all but her most "advanced" hearers. Fourteen years later when Elsie Clews Parsons threw out the suggestion that a period of "trial marriage" might prevent much unhappiness among young people, pulpits in her native land thundered their disapproval of her and her book.[1]

Obviously the recent relaxation of the taboo upon critical examination of our sex mores would not have occurred without grave cause. And this cause may be found in the fact that the ancient institution of marriage and the family is not working smoothly under modern conditions of life. The friction in the machinery has gradually become so loud and persistent that its harsh grating offends the ears of conservatives and radicals alike and can no longer be ignored. Just as maladjustment within the church or the government has led in the past to criticism and ultimately to revolutionary changes, so a similar disharmony between the family and contemporary economic, social, and psychological facts is producing a volume of comment, criticism, and suggestions for reform more or less revolutionary.

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[1] *The Family*, p. 349.

Under these conditions it would seem that a serious and impartial study of the family institution in its historical evolution would be timely and helpful to young women and men who will probably spend the greater part of their lives within some family. Such a study should help us to understand and appreciate the enormous importance of the family in ancient and modern civilization. It should make plain the indispensable services rendered to society in the past, the important contributions of the family to present social life under transformed conditions, and the basic functions of the family in the society of the future. Furthermore, it should help the student to comprehend how certain marriage customs and ideas have sprung from circumstances rooted deep in ancient culture history and how, through sheer force of social inertia, they persist in contemporary life long after they have been outgrown. For instance, the restrictions still laid, in some countries, on the holding of property by married women, as well as the management of it, goes back to feudal times, when powerful overlords looked to their vassals to furnish quotas of armed men in case of war. Clearly a woman holding a fief could not be relied upon to secure and equip these forces—hence the feudal law that women could not inherit land unless there were no male heir. This situation, together with the widespread legal theory that a woman's separate personality was merged in that of the husband after marriage, is chiefly responsible for the laws on the statute books of certain modern states limiting the power of married women to hold and manage property, to make contracts, to sue, and to conduct their own cases before the law. Again, the general custom among civilized nations whereby the father has superior rights in the guardianship of children goes far back in culture history to the beginnings of the patriarchal family among Aryan people. However this family type might differ in details among Greeks, Romans, Slavs, and medieval barbarians, its essential character remained the same. It was an organization in which the oldest male head was the undisputed ruler of wife, children, and (in Rome) slaves. Domestic religion, control of property, the education and marriage of children, even the control of the conduct of his wife—all were in the hands of the patriarch who was thus the sole arbiter of the destinies of every member of his household. Small wonder that such vast powers, sanctioned by ages of custom, should yield tardily and grudgingly to modern conditions.

To be enlightened concerning the sources of our present-day ideas and practices with respect to marriage, the family, and irregular sex relations outside the sanctioned marriage institution is to be equipped for dealing with outworn customs and ancient abuses. No scientist would attempt to solve a practical problem in chemistry or biology until he had thoroughly mastered the causes of the phenomenon and the conditions favorable to its maintenance. Likewise no one desirous of bringing about improvements in the sex mores can hope to work intelligently and helpfully without understanding the historic causes of modern sex and family customs. An open-minded study of the genesis and evolution of the family, together with its indispensable contributions to civilization, should induce not only an enlightened desire to work for much-needed changes but also an appreciation of the complexity and delicate ramifications of the problem and of the peculiar difficulty of achieving reforms in folkways hallowed by daily use and wont. To attain a clear perspective with regard to those human relationships closely bound up with our deepest and most intimate feelings is a difficult accomplishment and demands ability to detach ourselves from an obscuring cloud of instinct and emotion (in the interest of clarity and truth). Once the ideal of a freer and more spiritual marriage and family life has been perceived, there is no less need for the clear recognition of realities and the patient, tactful persistence in educating the popular mind which seem the only sure methods of social change in this difficult field of social relationships. The sex mores of a people cannot be transformed in a day or a generation; and, even though changes in ideal and practice seem to be following rapidly upon each other, it is probable that the minds of the vast body of unthinking or conservative people remain unchanged on these questions. Witness the action of the Episcopal Church of America in its 1922 convention refusing to sanction divorce save for the one cause of infidelity and prohibiting clergymen from marrying any divorced person except the innocent party to a divorce on Scriptural grounds. While experiments in a more ideally satisfying sex and family life will doubtless be made from time to time by daring souls, the large majority of men and women must be won by the slow and undramatic method of education to acceptance of the freedom of men and women in marriage, of the degrading character of sex relations without love and spiritual union, of the urgent need for a sounder understanding of sex life on the part of young and old.

When the ban, laid centuries ago, upon critical examination of marriage and family customs began to be lifted, a long step was taken toward the dawn of a better social order. And when enlightened education of every youth and adult in the purposes and meaning of sex and family life has won the day, it is reasonable to hope that the present restless dissatisfaction with our sex folkways will give place to efforts (on the part of most individuals) to realize a finer sex relationship, a freer, more satisfying, and at the same time more spiritually developing form of family life than any the race has known. A historical study of the family reveals the slow, upward climb of mankind from brute sex lust to romantic love, from the more or less complete subordination of women and children within the family to relative personal freedom. The strong family unit of past generations has already split up into its component individuals, recognized as separate persons before the law, with definite legal rights. But the end is not yet. The hardest lessons men and women have to learn are those of true love and of the necessity for freedom in personal development within the family to the end that, one by one, all those fetters upon individual growth inherited from the autocratic civilization of the past shall be struck off.

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PART ONE

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

PRIMITIVE FORMS OF MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY

DIFFICULTIES ATTENDING THE STUDY OF THE PRIMITIVE FAMILY

THE student of social institutions who seeks to obtain clear ideas about marriage, family customs, and the position of women and children among primitive peoples soon discovers that he is confronted with a mass of material dealing with a bewildering number of tribes inhabiting widely separated portions of the earth. Not only is there the greatest variety of marriage and family customs among these peoples, but the student is further confused by the fact that anthropologists explain the data at hand by contradictory theories. The earlier social writers of the last century showed a disposition to formulate too hastily a theory of the original form of sex relationships and to interpret data revealing the sharpest differences in the light of their chosen formula of explanation. Only within the last decade or two have anthropologists resolved to throw overboard all ready-made theories concerning family origins and customs and to investigate the sex mores of each tribe in the open-minded spirit and by the painstaking methods of science. The result has been to reduce the number of conflicting views with regard to the original forms of marriage and family organization and to increase our store of accurate knowledge of the manifold sex customs of primitive peoples. So wide a variety of types of family life makes generalization difficult, and the careful writer will therefore draw general conclusions cautiously and even tentatively. Nevertheless, certain customs do emerge from the mass of conflicting facts which appear to be common to a large majority of tribes. For example, the wide prevalence of clearly defined kinship systems, of marriage prohibitions, of wife purchase, and of rules of residence makes possible some general conclusions regarding the primitive family, even while these may admit of numerous exceptions.

MARRIAGE: ITS MEANING AND ORIGIN

Having cleared the ground of a few outstanding difficulties, we may next consider the question, What is the meaning of marriage and how did it originate? The word *marriage* signifies to most people a union of one man and one woman based upon mutual affection and continuing to the end of life. Such, however, is not the meaning attached to the term by students of primitive life. To them, marriage means a more or less temporary union of male and female persisting beyond the act of procreation and the birth of children to the time when the offspring can care for their primary wants themselves. From this point of view, marriage is purely a biologic function, a means whereby the species is maintained. But if this be the fundamental significance of marriage, it is clear that such unions are not confined to the human race but flourish among the higher mammals, especially the apes, and even among birds. It is a fact well known to naturalists that the male gorilla, the chimpanzee, and the orang-utan remain with the female and their common offspring until they are able to shift for themselves. The male not only protects his mate and their young, but he procures food for them during their period of helplessness. Here, then, is an example of the essential meaning of marriage as understood by anthropologists.

But what is the original cause of such unions, characterized as they are by some degree of permanency? Mutual affection between male and female can hardly explain the facts, since mates frequently separate for trivial causes, among both the apes and primitive man, after the young can care for themselves. Sexual desire cannot of itself account for marriage, since this impulse comes and goes fitfully and can be easily satisfied without the formation of permanent ties. The true explanation of the origin of marriage is held by most anthropologists to lie in the complete helplessness of the offspring of both apes and man, which requires the services of both parents over a long period of time. Those parents who did not develop the nurturing instinct lost their offspring through death and did not perpetuate themselves. Thus Nature "selected" for survival those species in which parental care of the young was most fully developed. If, then, the helplessness of infancy be the primary cause of a union of male and female permanent enough to be called marriage, we are led to the interesting conclusion that *the family is the true origin of marriage,* not marriage of the family. When we reflect that marriages are frequently contracted to-day with the definite purpose of postponing for years the rearing of a family, or of having no children at all, this well-established theory of the genesis of marriage assumes peculiar significance. In an age when marriage is coming to be looked upon as the union of a man and a woman for personal motives, i.e., satisfaction of love and the desire for congenial and stimulating comradeship, the biologic origin of such union is quite frequently ignored.

UNIVERSALITY OF THE INDIVIDUAL FAMILY

Although the original forms of the family were various, one characteristic seems to hold good of family organization among them all—even of the "group marriage" of Australian and Melanesian tribes, viz., *the family was individual.* By this is meant, of course, that the family consisted of a separate and well-defined household group composed of husband (or husbands), wife (or wives), and children, and, in some instances, of the maternal or paternal grandparents with their children. The researches of anthropologists tend to support the theory that the individual family precedes in development the sib or clan and hence is the original unit of social organization. On the prevalence of the individual family Dr. Lowie writes that we "are justified in concluding that regardless of all other social arrangements the individual family is the omnipresent social unit. It does not matter whether marital relations are permanent or temporary; whether there is polygyny or polyandry or sexual license; whether conditions are complicated by the addition of members not included in *our* family circle: the one fact stands out beyond all others that everywhere the husband, wife and immature children constitute a unit apart from the remainder of the community." [1]

MARRIAGE PROHIBITIONS

Among all primitive peoples there exist certain restrictions upon marriage. The more general of these prohibitions may be briefly treated under the following heads: (1) incest, (2) endogamy and exogamy, (3) marriage within a limited group.

Incest.

The horror of incest, or sex relationship between near relatives, is universal among primitive tribes; but the interpretation of what constitutes incest differs widely in opinion and practice. Social writers have offered numerous explanations of this widely prevalent aversion. Hobhouse regards it as instinctive, while Westermarck inclines to the belief that the horror of incest is not primarily an aversion to intercourse between near relatives but rather a dislike of cohabitation between household associates. Be the reason what it may, this deep-rooted feeling has led to the formulation of incest prohibitions among all peoples. Universally sex intercourse between parent and child is forbidden. On the other hand, marriages between brother and sister were common among the ruling classes of Hawaii, Peru, and ancient Egypt. The explanation of this custom seems to be that the chieftains and kings of these peoples had developed such pride of race that only sisters of the blood were regarded as worthy to mate with them. At the opposite extreme is the custom of some tribes of prohibiting marriage between second and third cousins and even, as in the case of the Paviotso tribe of Nevada, of the most remote cousins, who are held to be blood kin.

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[1] *Primitive Society* (Boni and Liveright, New York, 1920), pp. 66–67. By permission.

Exogamy and Endogamy.

Further restrictions upon marriage are seen in the customs of exogamy and endogamy. The tribal requirement that marriage be outside the clan is called *exogamy;* the requirement that mating shall be wholly within the clan is called *endogamy*. And, be it noted, these customs have all the coercive force of law. Once established, they operate as powerful prohibitions against marriage within or without the clan as the case may be. Numerous theories have been advanced by social writers to account for the prohibition of marriage within the clan. One of the earliest views was that such arrangements prevented the marriage of kinsfolk. Tylor,[2] however, holds that exogamy did not originate in the desire to prevent marriage among kindred, since marriages were prohibited only on the mother's or the father's side, thus making unions between kin on the other side admissible. Rather does Tylor believe that exogamous marriages had a political source. They were a means of binding various clans together in peaceful alliances. This view receives support from the studies of Morgan among the Iroquois tribes, where intermarriage clearly had political significance. McLennan and others have sought to account for exogamy by the widespread practice of female infanticide, which would force men to secure wives outside their own clan. The flaws

[2] See article "The Matriarchal Family System," in *Nineteenth Century,* July, 1896.

in this theory lie in the facts that (1) female infanticide is by no means a universal primitive custom and (2) the theory does not explain the prohibition of marriage within the clan. Even if men were compelled to seek mates outside the kinship or totem group, there would seem to be no reason why they should not marry such women in the clan as had been permitted to live.

Endogamy has also been accounted for on the theory that it is a product of racial pride, class divisions, and religious taboos. Thus Lowie points out that endogamy is firmly established among the Hindus, whose caste system is ironclad. Wherever the tribe is split up into groups regarded as higher or lower in rank, there the prohibition of marriage outside an individual's own group tends to prevail. The ancient Jews practised endogamy for religious reasons, in order that the monotheistic worship of Jehovah should not be stamped out by intermarriage with their idolatrous and polytheistic neighbors.

In a recent suggestive work called *The Mothers* Briffault holds that the biological family was the original social grouping, held together by the maternal instincts of the mother. In his view there is only one way whereby the maternal family could keep its feminine character while it expanded into larger social groupings, namely, by the sons marrying outside the group and leaving it, while the daughters remained and paired with males from other groups who joined the maternal family group of their wives. Thus, starting from the postulate of an original maternal family in which feminine instincts furnished the amalgam, Briffault is led to the further position that *exogamy,* originating in nascent human society, is the most common practice of primitive peoples. From this position he is led to another, viz., that matrilocal residence was a well-nigh universal custom. Briffault's monumental study in three volumes is an excellent illustration of the dangers which inhere in assuming a fundamental postulate and then seeking evidence in anthropological data to support it. Such a method obviously ignores or minimizes contradictory data in the interest of a favorite theory. Many very primitive tribes are paternal in organization, e.g., the Australians; exogamy is far from being a universal custom among peoples very low in culture; and matrilocal residence in primitive societies is less common than patrilocal.[3]

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[3] See Briffault's arguments in *The Mothers,* Vol. I, pp. 200–202.

FORMS OF MARRIAGE AND SEX RELATIONSHIP AMONG PRIMITIVE TRIBES

With respect to sex relationships and unions the same bewildering variety exists among primitive peoples as is found in regard to every other social and family custom. A considerable degree of sexual license is permitted in some tribes, as among the Australians, the Eskimos, and others. Lowie states that from every part of the world come reports of wife-lending as an act of hospitality on the part of a man to a comrade or to a visitor sojourning under his roof.[4] Moreover "group marriage," or more precisely "sexual communism," is a not altogether uncommon custom which may exist side by side with regular individual marriage. Among the Chukchi of Eastern Siberia married men related to each other often form a voluntary group for the purpose of sharing wives; and men not related to each other will sometimes form similar groups as a method of binding themselves together in a firm friendship. Unmarried men are rarely admitted to these groups, since they could not reciprocate the favors granted them. Likewise among certain Australian tribes, as the Urabunna and the Dieri, custom decrees that a man may marry only a woman related to him in a definite way as, for example, his mother's mother's brother's daughter's daughter. But once his marriage to this woman has been consummated, the wife may become a sort of secondary wife or concubine to several other men, single or married, who stand to her in the same approved relationship as does her husband. Apparently a council of tribal elders confers these rights of concubinage on persons who are potential spouses, i.e., stand to each other in the proper relationship. It should be noted, however, that a wife takes precedence over a concubine when both are in the same camp; and no man may seize his concubine and abduct her from her lawful husband except at certain limited periods when sexual license is permitted by the tribe. The wife may herself ask her husband to select a concubitant for her, but if he declines to do so she cannot compel him, nor can she refuse to be the concubine of any man to whom she is allotted.

Although these customs may appear to modern students as approaching closely to sexual promiscuity, it should not be forgotten that individual permanent marriage *does* exist among these tribes and concubinage is restricted both by the influence of tribal elders and by sexual jealousy.

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[4] *Primitive Society*, p. 49.

Apart from group marriage, which is very rare, the forms of marital union most frequently found among rude peoples are polygamy, polyandry, and a modified monogamy. *Polygamy,* when precisely used, designates both the marriage of a man with more than one wife and the union of a woman with more than one husband. The exact term to indicate marriage with two or more wives is *polygyny,* and this term will be consistently used in that sense in this study. *Polyandry* designates that form of polygamy where a woman mates with several husbands.

Polygyny.

Marriage with several women is very general among primitive tribes. Probably the determining cause of this type of union is not the desire for sexual variety, although this doubtless plays its part. Far more important, however, are certain economic and social causes. The man with more than one wife has a group of workers—wives and children—more or less under his control, who can be utilized to increase his store of goods. If he works them hard enough, they may add materially to his wealth. Moreover a plurality of wives greatly enhances a man's prestige within the tribe. It is an outward and visible sign of power and prosperity. Therefore it is not surprising to learn that polygyny flourishes among peoples widely scattered over the face of the earth. It is found among the Iroquois tribes of North America, the Kai of New Guinea, and many native tribes of Siberia and Africa. But it is one thing to state that polygyny is a widespread form of marriage and quite another to declare that among polygynous peoples all men have more than one wife. There are certain factors bearing upon this practice which definitely restrict it to the chieftains and to a group of powerful men within each tribe. First, it should be remembered that almost universally, under natural conditions, the numerical ratio of the sexes is nearly equal. "The first thing to do," says Lowie, "on hearing of a polygamous people is to demand a census of the marriageable members of both sexes." Obviously, if the men and women in a tribe are approximately equal in numbers polygyny must be limited to a few men of wealth and prestige. Even then certain other men must go without mates or secure them by capture or purchase from another tribe.

A further restriction upon polygyny is economic in character. Wife-purchase appears to be a well-nigh universal custom in primitive society. It prevails very generally among Indian tribes of North America and the natives of Asia, Africa, and the Pacific islands. Now it is clear that a man's capacity to secure wives is limited to his ability to pay the bride-price, which not seldom is large. For example, among the Kirghiz of southeastern Siberia the cost of a wife may be as high as eighty-one head of cattle. Under such conditions a man must collect the property necessary to buy a wife over a long period of time before the bargain is concluded. Unless he is well-to-do, a second wife becomes a luxury which cannot be afforded for several years, if at all.

Finally, it should be noted that the custom prevalent in some tribes whereby a man at marriage goes to live with his wife's people tends to discourage polygyny. To bring a new mate into a household composed of his wife's relatives would appear too rash an act to be performed often by any prudent man.

Polyandry.

A very few existing tribes have established that form of marriage wherein a group of men, frequently brothers, share a wife in common. With the exception of scattered Eskimo communities, polyandry is almost wholly restricted to Tibet, southern India, and a few scattered islands. The custom in the latter regions is probably due to a preponderance of males. Among the Todas of southern India, female infanticide has been so freely practised that the natural proportion of the sexes is seriously disturbed. Dr. Rivers, in his interesting genealogical study of the Todas, found that, for three generations, the ratio of males to 100 females in a Toda division was 259, 202, and 171 respectively.[5] Under such conditions it is not difficult to see why polyandry flourishes among this tribe, although the cause of the common practice of female infanticide is more obscure. On the other hand, the agricultural peoples of Tibet do not kill female infants, yet polyandry is firmly established among them, owing to a scarcity of females which has not yet been satisfactorily explained.

Polyandry among both Todas and Tibetans is usually of the fraternal type; that is, a woman becomes the wife of several brothers. When a child is born, the oldest brother establishes his right to be held its legal father by going through a prescribed ceremony with a bow and arrow; but all the brothers are regarded as in a sense the child's fathers. The situation is more difficult under that form of polyandry practised by certain Toda groups where a woman becomes the wife of several men who may live in different villages. In such circumstances she divides her time among her various husbands, remaining a month or two with each. If a child is born, the man (usually the first husband) who performs the appropriate ceremony with bow and arrow is adjudged the father. In case several children are born, the first husband claims two or three and then permits the other husbands a chance to establish their rights to children.

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[5] W. H. R. Rivers, *The Todas* (London, 1906), pp. 477–478.

The Theory of Original Monogamy.

There remains for consideration the theory of a considerable group of social writers that the most widespread and persistent form of marriage has been a loose monogamy—that very generally one man and one woman remained together as mates for a considerable period, even though these unions may frequently have been temporary in character. The evidence in support of this view is briefly as follows: (1) The monogamic family is the most efficient unit in the hard struggle for existence. Such a small, mobile group, united by common interest, can secure food more readily than a larger body. This fact doubtless accounts in part for the very general existence of pair marriage among the apes and chimpanzees, while it may well be a determining factor in the practice of monogamy among many primitive tribes at present, as, for example, the Veddahs of Ceylon and the inhabitants of the Andaman Islands in the Bay of Bengal. (2) Pair marriage must, perforce, have been the more general form in all stages of civilization, because the numerical relation of the sexes is nearly equal. History makes plain that, in every social group where polygyny flourishes, the possession of more than one wife is the privilege of the well-to-do who can afford to pay for it. Of necessity, in a tribe where men and women are approximately equal in numbers, the vast majority of men must be content with one wife. (3) The instinct of sexual jealousy is so strongly developed, among both the anthropoid apes and primitive man, that it must have operated powerfully against sexual promiscuity in its precise sense. (4) Monogamy probably preceded polygyny, since all evidence goes to show that the latter form of marriage is the product of rather advanced economic conditions, when private property in land and implements had developed and men could pay for the prestige of owning several wives.

These arguments have not been seriously challenged by anthropologists. Yet in themselves they hardly establish the theory that monogamy was the original form of the family among all primitive peoples. The conditions of life—climate, food supply, the existence of hunting and fishing grounds, the proximity of aggressively hostile tribes—all must have played their part in determining the type of family life among any people.

It need hardly be said that once any form of marriage has become thoroughly established among a people that form receives the powerful sanction of custom, while all the moral ideas of the tribe are implicated in it and lend it support. It is reported by travelers that Turkish women formerly looked with disapproval tinged with disgust upon the custom of monogamy practised by Western nations; and no doubt Toda women would show a similar distaste if obliged to adopt monogamic marriage. In the words of Sumner: "Whatever is defined and provided for in the *mores* as a way of solving the problem of life interests is never wrong." [6] The body of moral ideas which has grown up out of the custom of monogamy is probably no more powerful than that which supports polygyny or polyandry. All marriage forms are the product of economic and social circumstances, and all, when firmly grounded in custom, are crowned with a halo of moral and religious sanctions.

KINSHIP SYSTEMS

Primitive societies are divided not only into individual families but also into kinship groups or sibs claiming descent from a common ancestor. A brisk controversy has been carried on by anthropologists with respect to the question of priority in origin of the family and the sib or clan. At present the evidence seems to show that the sib was of later origin than the family, although it made its appearance very early in culture history. The kinship systems are two in number, (1) the matronymic, tracing descent through mothers, and (2) the patronymic, in which descent is traced through fathers.

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[6] *Folkways* (Ginn and Company, 1906), p. 375.

The Matronymic System.

The custom of organizing tribes into matrilineal clans is very general in primitive society. The maternal kinship system flourishes among such widely separated peoples as the Malays, the Melanesians of Oceania, the Iroquois and Pueblos of North America, and numerous African tribes. Several explanations have been given of the origin of the maternal sib which may be briefly summarized: (1) Its determining cause is the close physiological relationship of mother and child. (2) The custom of polygyny frequently leads to a segregation of the various wives and children in separate huts. Thus the children would be thrown into much closer association with the mother than with the father and would be held to belong to her. (3) Matrilineal descent is often linked with matrilocal residence, although not always. That is, the custom whereby a man, after marriage, goes to live with his wife's people is usually accompanied by a high development of the matrilineal system. It would be quite natural that, when a man is performing stipulated services in the household of his wife, in order to pay the purchase price demanded for her, his wife's kin should regard the offspring of the union as their own.

All these causes, and probably others, operated to bring about the development of maternal kinship groups. Under this system not only is descent traced through mothers, but property also frequently descends in the maternal line. This means, of course, that a child is held to be related only to his mother's kindred and quite commonly inherits lands and personal property from his mother's brothers or uncles—not from his father. In some tribes, however, as the Crow Indians of America, certain kinds of property are transmitted through the father's line and other kinds through the mother's. Again, among the Navahos of Arizona, where sheep-tending is the leading industry carried on by men, matrilineal descent is firmly established while property rights in the flocks descend through fathers. These are further illustrations of the endless variety of customs with regard to every institution of primitive society.

The Matriarchate and the Avunculate.

Because of the prevalence of matrilineal descent and inheritance among primitive peoples, certain social writers hold that these customs clearly indicate the predominance in primitive society of "mother-power." They argue that the relatively influential position of women in certain tribes, as the Pueblos, the Iroquois, and the Wyandottes of North America, where the matronymic system is firmly established, points to a stage of culture history when women were the dominating sex within both family and tribe. This theory has been eagerly seized upon by certain writers as evidence that women, having once ruled society, are eminently fitted to do so at present and will once more become the controlling force in social life. Such a theory, however gratifying to the upholders of woman's cause, rests upon a very slender foundation of fact. Tylor, Lowie, and other anthropologists who have carefully investigated the workings of the maternal system are convinced that the status of women *may* be but little improved by it. Among the Melanesian and Polynesian peoples of Oceania, where descent is traced through mothers, the position of women is one of marked inferiority, especially among the Fiji Islanders. The same holds true of the West Australians. Again, as anthropologists have repeatedly pointed out, even when descent and property are transmitted through mothers, women are not the ruling power within the individual household. This authority usually devolves upon the woman's brothers or uncles. Tylor has assembled valuable evidence which shows how influential is the position of the mother's brother under the maternal system.[7] He it is, rather than the father, who decides important questions concerning the training and the marriage of his sister's son; and it is quite often he who is the household head. Among the Hopi, the mother's brother instructs her children in tribal customs; among the Winnebago a nephew often serves as a servant to his uncle and formerly accompanied him on the warpath. Lowie tells us that in the Omaha tribe "the maternal uncle had full control of orphaned children and even during the parents' lifetime showed a parent's zeal in defending them or avenging an injury to which they were subjected." [8] But perhaps the most extreme case of uncle authority is reported from the coast of British Columbia, where the nephew makes his home with his uncle, works for him and finally marries his daughter and inherits his property. This widespread custom of according power and influence over children to the maternal uncle is called the *avunculate*. Manifestly where the practice exists there can be no such thing as a matriarchate. Nevertheless, there were a few tribes, as the Wyandottes of North America, where large powers were given to women. Among this people, women were once the ruling heads of households and constituted the majority in the clan and tribal councils.[9] Such instances, however, are very rare.

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[7] "The Matriarchal Family System," *Nineteenth Century,* Vol. XI, July, 1896.

[8] Lowie, *op. cit.,* p. 82.

In a recent work on the Trobriand Islanders of Northwestern Melanesia, Malinowski describes with interesting detail the matrilineal family as it exists among those island people. Descent, kinship, and every social relationship are reckoned through the mother. Inheritance of property, social rank, and magic descend not from father to son but from the mother's brother, the maternal uncle, to his sister's children. The mother is held to contribute *everything* to the child born of her. She feeds the child in her body before its birth and nourishes it with her milk after it is born. "The mother makes the child out of her blood," says the Trobriander; and the father is believed to have no share in generation. Yet marriage among these people is *patrilocal,* and the father is often a close companion and even nurse of his children and is more deeply attached to them than to his own kin. As a child grows older he learns that he is not of the same clan as the father who has been his playmate and friend, nor has he the same totem. His village and his people are not those of his father but of his mother's brother, to whom he later owes duties and services.[10]

PRIMITIVE FORMS OF MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY

The Patronymic System.

Under the patronymic system, relationship is traced through the father and quite commonly property is also transmitted in the paternal line. As has been previously suggested, there is little evidence to show that the paternal system has regularly followed upon the maternal and therefore represents a more advanced culture stage. Very primitive tribes, as the West Australians and the Fuegians of South America, have developed paternal descent and inheritance. The patronymic system, like the matronymic, is probably due to a variety of causes, economic and other. Moreover, it should be always kept in mind that the customs of one tribe have frequently influenced those of neighboring peoples. Cultural borrowing has been common in primitive as in civilized society. Lowie points out that the Hopi tribes probably borrowed their maternal system from the peoples they supplanted, since no kinship groups exist among the Shoshones, to which stock the Hopis belong. On the other hand, the Yukaghir of Siberia, who have developed the custom of matrilocal residence, which usually goes hand in hand with maternal descent, have borrowed their father-sibs from a neighboring tribe.

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[9] Powell, "Wyandotte Government," Smithsonian *Miscellaneous Collections,* Vol. XXV, p. 76 *et seq.*

[10] *The Sexual Life of Savages in North-western Melanesia,* pp. 4–7.

The Physiology of Generation: The Custom of Couvade.

It is an interesting fact that, among primitive peoples in general, paternity is not regarded as a physiological relation but as a social claim enforced by custom. The Trobriand Islanders see no necessary connection between cohabitation and the birth of offspring nor do the Australian savages and many Melanesian tribes. The impregnation of the woman is widely believed to be brought about by eating certain foods or passing certain haunted spots. Many rude peoples believe that the moon is the cause of both pregnancy and menstruation. Indeed the Maori of New Zealand have a popular saying that "the moon is the real husband of all women." Therefore, it is not surprising that certain tribes have developed the custom of *couvade,* the curious practice whereby the father takes to his hammock or bed when a child is about to be born and submits to a number of inflexible taboos on his eating and on all dangerous activities which, by the method of sympathetic magic, are believed to be harmful to the infant. This amusing custom is widely prevalent among the Melanesians and may probably be explained by the desire of the father to emphasize a close physiological bond as existing between himself and his child. Apparently the practice is found only in tribes where the maternal-paternal system of kinship prevails. Codrington states that only in San Christoval—one of the Melanesian group—did he find a father actually lying in while his wife was suffering the pangs of childbirth and among that people *the child follows his father's kindred.*

MORALS IN PRIMITIVE SOCIETY

Just as there is the widest variety of customs among primitive tribes with respect to marriage, kinship, control of children, and inheritance of property, so there are the sharpest contrasts in their conceptions of morality, especially sex morals. Whatever custom with regard to sex relations has grown out of the social conditions of a people receives the powerful sanction of tradition and popular acceptance and thus comes to be regarded as the only right method of dealing with these matters. As Ratzel and others have pointed out, sex morality in the early stages of civilization is chiefly concerned with the *securing of private rights in women.*[11] When a husband has bought and paid for a wife, he regards her as his property. Therefore adultery is generally condemned among rude peoples, not because it offends the moral sense, but because it is universally regarded as an attack upon property rights secured by purchase. As the husband's rights in his wife become more firmly established by tribal usage, adultery becomes a more serious offense, sometimes punishable by death. Under such circumstances prostitution arises as a means of satisfying man's sex impulses without endangering family ties. But, although primitive man resents any forcible infringement of his marital rights, he may, and in some tribes often does, lend his wife to a visitor as an act of hospitality or to a chieftain as a mark of respect. In his study of the Point Barrow Eskimo, Murdoch [12] tells us that among the tribes around Repulse Bay it is a custom to exchange wives for a week or two every two months; and among the Greenland Eskimos wives are exchanged at festivals. Such customs, however, are not regarded as invalidating the husband's prior rights in his wife. It is significant, also, that among the Eskimos prostitution is uncommon, as it is among many other primitive tribes.

With respect to the question of the chastity of unmarried girls and youths, tribal customs once more reveal the greatest differences. Codrington says that among the Melanesian Islanders unchastity before marriage is in general not very seriously regarded and sex intercourse between boys and girls is far from rare. Yet on the island of Saa a girl found pregnant before marriage would be put to death unless her seducer were willing to pay her purchase price and marry her. Also in the Banks Islands, a Melanesian group, girls are carefully looked after and their chastity is guarded. Clearly, there is a causal relation between child betrothal and regard for chastity. Where girls are betrothed in infancy, families are careful to keep them chaste, since the suitor of a girl would refuse to marry her and would reclaim his purchase money if he knew that his rights in her person had been infringed. Ellis says that, among the Negro tribes of the Gold Coast of Africa, non-virginity is a ground for repudiating a bride only when the girl has been betrothed at a tender age. Unbetrothed girls may bestow their favors as they please without restriction. In this tribe, infant betrothal of girls is customary only among the better classes, and loose sex practices are common among the unmarried of the lower class. The same holds true in Samoa and among the Trobriand Islanders. It may be said by way of summing up the situation that at one end of the scale there are tribes which carefully guard the chastity of girls; at the other are some that sanction the father in making his daughter a prostitute for gain. But in both cases it should be clearly understood that *no ideal of chastity as a virtue has emerged and become clearly defined.* Virginity is insisted upon, if at all, because the suitor has property rights in his betrothed.

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[11] Ratzel, *History of Mankind,* Vol. I, p. 120.

[12] *Ninth Report,* American Bureau of Ethnology, 1892.

DIVORCE IN PRIMITIVE SOCIETY

Among the vast majority of primitive tribes divorce is more easily accomplished than marriage. The privilege, in most cases, is restricted to men, but divorce on the initiative of the woman is not as uncommon as might be supposed. Codrington says that among the Melanesians divorce is easy and very general and is effected at the will of either party. The same holds true of the Slave Coast Negroes, of the Eskimos, and of numerous other tribes in which temporary disagreements or incompatibility are frequent causes of separation. An obstacle to complete freedom of divorce, however, lies in the property paid for the wife. Among some tribes, if a man divorces his wife unjustly, he must forfeit her purchase price. If he demands of his wife's family the repayment of the property he gave for her, on the ground that the woman is unsatisfactory, he runs the danger that a blood feud may be declared against him by the offended relatives. On the whole, however, dissatisfaction with a wife is valid ground for her divorce and the repayment of the purchase money. By no means so privileged, however, is the wife; yet among certain tribes, the Eskimos and the Melanesians for example, a woman may leave her husband at any time because of a trivial grievance. In this case, however, she must return the property paid for her. If she has "worked out" a large part of it, "a pig or two settles all claims." The same holds true of the Africans of the Slave Coast, where the wife may separate from her husband with no other difficulty than the repayment of the "head-money" and any expenses incurred for her. In all tribes marriage tends to become more stable where children are present, and less permanent where they are lacking. Indeed, barrenness is almost universally recognized as a just cause for the repudiation of a wife.

But, although divorce is an easy matter among primitive peoples, custom usually lays down rules respecting the custody of the children and the division of the family property. Under the matronymic system the children belong to the mother and depart with her; whereas under the paternal kinship system they remain with the father who owns them. Even in this case it is not uncommon for helpless infants to be handed over to the mother, especially if they be females. Custom also prescribes how common belongings shall be divided. In some instances the husband and wife each takes the property that was his or hers at the time of marriage and divide all property accumulated afterwards.

In a few scattered tribes there are evidences that divorce is not wholly a private matter between the parties concerned, but tends to be regulated in some measure by group opinion. Ellis says that among the Slave Coast Negroes a wife who is grossly abused may lay the matter before the head men of the village. If she can prove her case she is permitted to leave her husband without repaying the head-money he gave for her. In West Victoria (Australia) a man may not divorce his wife before he has summoned a council of the chiefs of her family as well as his own. The Karo-Karo tribe in Sumatra permits divorce only by mutual consent; and, strange as it may seem, two of the most primitive peoples of whom we have knowledge—the Papuans of New Guinea and the Veddahs of Ceylon—regard marriage as a lifelong union and do not recognize divorce.

THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN THE PRIMITIVE FAMILY

Educated people generally believe that the status of women in primitive society was very low. In fact, it is held that woman was a mere chattel, bought and sold in the wife-market and held as an ill-used, overworked drudge. Thus Herbert Spencer declares: "The only limit to the brutality women are subjected to by men of the lowest races, is their inability to live and propagate under greater."[13] This is an excellent example of the sweeping statements made by social writers in the past which a more extensive investigation of the life of primitive peoples does not support. Here, as in every other phase of primitive family customs, the widest variety exists. Needless to say, there *are* many tribes in which the women are little better than beasts of burden. This is true of certain of the Kafir tribes of Africa, of most Australian tribes, of the Koreans, and of many others. But among some of the most backward peoples the position of women is not far removed from that of men. Thus the Veddahs of Ceylon treat women with much consideration, and such appears to be true in general of the Eskimos, the Dyaks of Borneo, and many of the North American Indians. Murdoch says of the Point Barrow Eskimo that women "seem to be on terms of perfect equality with men" and not rarely are trusted companions whose opinions are sought by their husbands. Likewise Malinowski states that the household of the Trobriand Islander is founded on the principle of equality and independence of function. Because the man owns the house and lives in his own village he is master; but the woman has much influence, since she and her relatives furnish a large part of the family food supply.

Great caution should be used in any attempt to sum up the status of women in primitive society. As Lowie has pointed out, several factors should be considered in judging their position. What treatment is accorded women? What is their status as judged by tribal custom? What opportunities for public activity have they? What is the character and extent of women's work? Curiously enough, such correlations as exist among these factors are chiefly due to tribal experience—not to any social principle or logic. For example, the Iroquois women own the land, till the soil, and work harder than the men. Their status is high among the five tribes, they have a place in the tribal councils, and they are well treated. On the other hand the women of the Altaian Turks in Central Asia perform nearly all the useful work of the tribe, from tending and milking the cattle to manufacturing all utensils and cultivating the plots of barley. Yet their position is distinctly inferior to that of men.[14]

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[13] *Principles of Sociology* (1885 ed.), Vol. I, Part III, p. 713.

[14] See Lowie, *Primitive Society*, pp. 74–76, 187–189.

Sex Division of Labor.

In his interesting work on *Woman's Share in Primitive Culture* Mason paints a glowing picture of the valuable industrial work carried on by women in rude societies. Indeed as we read of the multifarious labors of primitive women we are tempted to ask whether the men did anything but hunt, fish, fight, and lie indolently about the campfire. Here as elsewhere, however, it is well to remember that the customs of primitive tribes with regard to sex division of labor vary as extensively as do their other domestic arrangements. Although women were probably the first agriculturists, employing the rude digging stick to plant their seeds, yet it was man who invented the plough and domesticated animals. Plough agriculture and stock-raising are very commonly male occupations in primitive tribes and are sometimes jealously guarded from the encroachments of women.[15] The Todas of India forbid their wives to have any connection with cattle, even prohibiting them from cooking food containing milk; and the Bantu of Africa have developed a powerful taboo against a woman's entering a corral. Yet there are exceptions to this very general custom. Among the Altaian people of Central Asia the woman tends the cattle and milks the cows, sheep, and goats; and in the Hottentot tribes she regularly milks the cows.

Another widespread division of labor on a sex basis is that with respect to agriculture. Very generally, plough husbandry is in the hands of men, while gardening with the hoe is usually an occupation of the women. In Polynesia, both sexes work together in the fields; whereas among most of the horticultural tribes of Oceania, America, and Africa, gardening is exclusively woman's work. Codrington tells us that among the Melanesians apportionment of sex labor is determined by custom.

When we turn to household industries the same variety with respect to the division of the work on a sex basis confronts us. Among the Eskimos, sex division of labor is fairly sharp. While the men supply the animal food, under conditions of great hardship in winter, the women care for the supplies, cook, prepare the skins brought home by the men, and make them into garments. Occasionally a woman is sent out on the ice to bring in a seal her husband has taken and is too exhausted to drag home himself. In summer the women join the men in the hunt, but at other times they ply their industries at home. The Zuñi women of New Mexico undertake the work of finishing the building of the house after the men have laid the stone foundations and set the huge rafters in place. In every Pueblo house is a rectangular mill divided into compartments, each with its own grinding stone of different degrees of smoothness. Kneeling before these mills the squaws do all the laborious work of grinding the grain to the desired fineness. They also share in making water-jars, weaving baskets of osier, and making woolen and cotton blankets woven in their own looms. Curiously enough, among the Melanesians the weaving of sails for canoes and mats for floor coverings is the work of women, as is also the preparation of yams and taro for food; while the actual cooking of the food is the work of men, who dig a hole in the ground, filled with hot stones, which serves as an oven.

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[15] See Lowie, *op. cit.*, pp. 74–76.

The Economic Contributions of Women.

It is a common fallacy, into which even trained sociologists may fall, that woman in primitive society was in a condition of economic dependence in all cases where she did not provide animal food or till the ground. Even so careful a writer as Lowie, referring to the fact that the domestication of animals and plough culture were achievements of men, attributes the low status of women in China, India, and Central Asia to the fact that they were "economically dependent." Yet in China, at least, the women of the poorer classes have labored immemorially in the tea and rice fields. The silk industry in China has also been carried on in considerable part by feminine labor. To class women, busy from morning to night in a round of productive home industries, as "economic dependents" seems both unfair and contrary to the facts, unless economic productivity be viewed narrowly as supplying raw materials for food and clothing. And it should be added that this narrow interpretation of women's work has been the generally accepted one even to modern times. Yet in primitive society most women were economic assets of the utmost value, even if they never plied a hoe or furnished a pound of animal food. They were, with negligible exceptions, *producers of usable household goods* in the earliest times, and have continued so to be until the revolution in domestic industry, following upon the tremendous industrial changes of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, deprived women of most of the productive tasks so long carried on in their own homes. It should not be overlooked, moreover, that the productive labor of women in all ages has been carried on under the tremendous handicap of continuous bearing and rearing of offspring.

CHILD NURTURE AND EDUCATION IN THE PRIMITIVE FAMILY

The birth rate in most societies was enormously high but so, too, was the child mortality rate. When we consider the hard conditions of life in primitive society, the almost total ignorance of the simplest essentials of child care, the ever-present menace of war, plague, and famine, we are not surprised at the cruelly high death rate among infants. This was raised still higher by the customs of abortion and infanticide, widely prevalent in rude societies. The cause of this ruthless practice was chiefly economic—an insufficient food supply or the difficulty of carrying an infant from place to place when the tribe was migratory. In his valuable book, *The Primitive Family as an Educational Agency,* A. J. Todd gives many examples of abortion and infanticide as practised by African tribes, by the Fijians, the Brazilians, the Australians, the Fuegians, and other backward peoples. Parental affection, although it may be present in some degree, yields to the terrible pressure of harsh conditions of life.

Curious birth rites are practised in those instances in which the child is permitted to live. In Oceania it is customary to cut the natal cord of the boy on a club to make him brave; of the girl on the board on which *tapa* [16] is beaten out to make her an industrious housewife. Quite commonly parents observe certain food taboos in order that the child may grow well and strong. In the Melanesian Islands, the father abstains from heavy work for a month in fear that it might bring injury to the infant; and he carefully avoids all sacred places where the child could not go without harm. Among the Fijians, both father and mother give up eating fish and meat for fear of making the baby ill. The Eskimo mother refrains from eating raw meat a whole year. After each meal she puts by a little food in a skin bag—a custom called "laying up food for the infant," which is eloquent of the severe struggle of this people for existence. Among the Kafirs of Africa, a mother refrains from eating the underlip of the pig lest the lower lip of her child should grow too large, and the meat of the buck, lest the baby grow ugly.[17] In addition to food taboos, certain charms and superstitious rites are used to keep away evil spirits from the child. Quite generally among primitive peoples, childbirth, like menstruation, is regarded as a function with great possibilities of inflicting harm, and mother and child are subjected to purifying ceremonies as soon as the infant is brought into the world. The Slave Coast Negroes employ priests and priestesses to conduct these rites. The Kafirs smoke new-born babies over a fire to ward off evil spirits, and hang charms about their necks as did the ancient Romans.

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[16] The bark of the paper mulberry tree which is beaten into cloth.

The Status of Children in Primitive Society.

There is abundant evidence to show that in most primitive tribes children are regarded by their parents as valuable property. Boys are very early put to work tending gardens, caring for cattle, or hunting and fishing, while girls carry wood and water, tend the fire, and help their mothers make garments or shoes. Panlitschke says of the Northeast African peoples: "The children of a married pair are . . . considered as scarcely higher than things. They are the property of the father, for whom they must work, from whom they must buy themselves off, who can sell them, and from whom they must be purchased. . . . Thus their labor power belongs to the father until the moment they leave the family, and become themselves the heads of families."[18] The same holds true of the Kafirs, of the Yakuts of northeastern Siberia, the Igorots of the Island of Luzon, and many other tribes.

So widespread a tendency to regard children as chattels to be bought, sold, and exploited raises the question whether parental love exists at all among primitive peoples; yet, if we may believe the reports of travelers and ethnologists, affection for children is frequently seen in savage tribes, even in those parents who wring the last ounce of labor from their offspring. Probably parental sentiment is crude, fitful, and irrational, as Todd would have us believe. He quotes Sutherland to the effect that the affection of savages for their children "is an instinct of race preservation analogous to that of the lower animals, and gratifying itself without restraint. The savage knows little of that higher affection subsequently developed which has a worthier purpose than merely to disport itself in the mirth of childhood, and at all hazards to avoid the annoyance of seeing its tears." [19] Yet tales are not lacking of real tenderness shown to children by savage parents, together with extreme parental indulgence. The Pueblos of New Mexico, the Indians of British Columbia, the Eskimo, and the Trobriand Islanders are reported to be remarkably fond of children and gentle in dealing with them. Indeed the fact that savage children are sometimes badly spoiled lends support to the theory that the affection shown them by their parents is less rational than emotional and not rarely gives way to sudden bursts of uncontrolled anger and impatience when children become too noisy and annoying.

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[17] D. Kidd, *Savage Childhood: A Study of Kafir Children,* p. 8.

[18] Quoted in A. J. Todd, *The Primitive Family as an Educational Agency,* p. 102.

Education of Children in the Primitive Family.

As might be expected, the training given to boys and girls in primitive homes varies greatly, depending upon the stage of civilization attained by the tribe and the amount of accumulated traditions, customs, rituals, and skills to be handed on to the young. So far as the primitive family had an educational purpose, it was to form in the young a body of fixed habits which would adjust them successfully to their immediate surroundings. As the life of the savage is chiefly spent in wresting a livelihood from nature, an important part of these habits would have to do with providing animal and vegetable food, making clothing, rude implements, and weapons, and keeping a roof over the family. Thus home education among savages has a strongly practical character. When a tribe has climbed a little farther up the ladder of civilization and has accumulated a store of traditions about the powers surrounding man and the proper ways to propitiate these forces, education may also take on a *social and moral* character. It would then consist not only in practical training but in the formation of habits concerned with propitiatory rites, ordeals, and the like, and in positive instruction in tribal beliefs and customs.

The sharpest differences prevail among primitive peoples with respect to (1) the existence of a *conscious* aim of educating the young and (2) the amount of instruction given. Among the Fuegians, the Brazilians, the Thompson River Indians, and the natives of Guiana, children are left to grow up with little or no attention from their parents after the earliest years. The children of the Micronesian Islands in the Pacific receive almost no training of any sort. In these tribes, parents leave their offspring to pick up what they need to make or do by watching their elders, imitating them, and practising until some skill is attained.

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[19] Todd, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

Fortunately for civilization, all primitive parents are not as indifferent to the education of their young. Among most savage tribes some attention is given to the practical training of the young in the pursuits they must carry on when grown. Since the content of this education is simple, concrete, and concerned with the arts of daily life, it can best be given within the home. The father takes upon himself to train his son in the pursuits of hunting, fishing, and warfare, and in such industries as are carried on by men within the tribe, while the mother familiarizes her daughter with such household skills as she has herself acquired and perhaps with gardening. Little theoretical instruction is given children by either parent. Small boys and girls are expected to observe the activities of their elders and quite early to imitate them. In some tribes children are given tiny weapons and implements and encouraged to try their skill at target-shooting or making moccasins or fishing nets.

Group Training.

The moral and social education of girls and boys seems to have been more a matter of clan than of family concern. Of course children must have picked up certain of the moral ideas and customs of their tribe within the home; but much the greater part of tribal tradition was imparted to youth in the puberty ordeals and initiation ceremonies so common in primitive society. Spencer and Gillen have described in great detail the ordeals to which Australian boys were subjected at puberty, as well as the initiatory rites by means of which they were given, in symbolic form, the religious and moral beliefs of their people. In those tribes where secret societies existed, as among the Fijians and the Torres Strait Islanders, boys were at a tender age taken from their mothers and brought up in society "lodges" which married women were not permitted to enter. Here they were instructed in the arts and morals of their people—in the accepted ways of house-building, fishing, fighting, in the tribal rules of conduct, and in religious traditions. Curious customs are found in the Hebrides Islands, New Guinea, and parts of Borneo where the girls are secluded, a few years prior to puberty, in huts or cells. Here they are almost completely isolated from human intercourse and prohibited from taking physical exercise and especially from seeing the sun or touching the earth. This abnormal life was enforced upon growing girls for periods ranging from three months to seven years, until they were physically mature and ready for marriage. Then their maternal aunts or other of their female relatives (but not their mothers) came to them, took them to the sea to bathe, or carried on other rites of purification, and instructed them in such of the tribal lore as it was important for women to know.[20]

Among a few primitive tribes, for example, the Blackfoot Indians, the ancient Mexicans, and the Pueblos, the parents themselves give definite moral instruction to the young. Grinnell tells us that a Blackfoot Indian who had daughters "would, as they grew large, often talk to them and give them good advice. . . . He would talk to each girl of the duties of a woman's life and warn her against the dangers she might expect to meet." The Pueblos of New Mexico also inculcated domestic and group virtues in their children by telling them tales of terror before the hearth-fire. In this direct moral instruction the parents were assisted by the elders and by the medicine men and women of the tribe. However, such deliberate and reflective family education is very rare among savage peoples.

THE SERVICES OF THE PRIMITIVE FAMILY TO CIVILIZATION

As we review the many customs and ideas that control the life of savage groups with respect to sex mores and family life, we must admit that primitive society has rendered very real services to civilization. It has regulated the relations of the sexes in such wise as to avoid promiscuity, which would have retarded, if not prevented, the development of a body of customary sex morals and the organization of stable family life. The primitive family itself, however unsettled by frequent divorce and divided by polygamy, yet afforded a more or less permanent refuge for men and women from the disordered conditions of life and a nursery for the helpless young who might otherwise have perished. Then, too, the family preserved and passed on to the rising generation those technical skills by means of which primitive man was fed, clothed, and housed. Thus a store of knowledge indispensable to life was conserved and very slowly increased. Finally, in so far as the family upheld and inculcated the moral traditions and customs of the group, it rendered valuable service in helping to lay the foundation stones of a more idealistic conception of human relations than primitive man had even dimly perceived.

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[20] See Frazer, *The Golden Bough* (2d ed., 1900), Part III, pp. 204–233.

TOPICS FOR REPORTS

1. The Effect of Infancy upon Marriage.
   E. G. Westermarck, *The History of Human Marriage* (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1928), Vol. I, Ch. I.
2. Influence of Primitive Conditions of Life upon Parental Love and Care.
   A. J. Todd, *The Primitive Family as an Educational Agency* (G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1913), Ch. V.
3. Divorce among Primitive Peoples.
   Westermarck, *op. cit.*, Ch. XXIII.
4. The Seclusion of Girls before Puberty.
   J. G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough* (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1915), Part III, pp. 204–233.
5. Briffault's Views of the Maternal Family and of Woman's Position and Influence Therein.
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CHAPTER II

THE PATRIARCHAL FAMILY IN ANCIENT CIVILIZATION

ADVANCE BEYOND PRIMITIVE SOCIETY

IN the long course of centuries, certain peoples of the Aryan, Semitic, and Mongolian races climbed slowly from barbarism to civilization. Ages were required to transform the primitive tribes inhabiting India, China, Palestine, Greece, and Rome into civilized nations possessing a rich cultural inheritance from the past. The advance of these and other neighboring peoples beyond primitive social conditions is evidenced by the development of (1) stable central governments; (2) codes of public law to some extent taking precedence over the early family and tribal law; (3) an organized religion in the hands of an educated priesthood; (4) letters and literature, making possible the transmission of invaluable social experience; (5) schools and educational systems, as deliberate means of handing on these cultural accumulations to the younger generations; and, above all, (6) some understanding of physical forces, which resulted in a satisfactory solution of man's fundamental problems of securing food, clothing, and shelter. Obviously this last phase of progress—the economic—is the foundation of all the others. Only when man has learned by arduous experience how to adapt nature's crude resources to his own needs, and to make fire, wind, and water serve his life purposes, can he wrest hours of leisure for reflection from the struggle for mere existence. It is, on the whole, the man of leisure who records in literature his dreams and aspirations, his plans and achievements, and creates in art forms his conceptions of beauty.

RELICS OF PRIMITIVE CUSTOMS AND IDEAS IN THE PATRIARCHAL FAMILY

But, despite the centuries of progress that intervene between primitive and ancient society, it would be a serious mistake to assume that no traces of barbaric social customs persisted in the civilizations of the Orient, Greece, and Rome. Evidences of the primitive origin of many family customs are plainly manifest. The old kinship systems in modified form were present in ancient society; relics of purchase marriage were apparent; male supremacy was fully established and reinforced by a religion of ancestor worship; the almost complete subordination of women and children was the universal custom. Of all social institutions the family has been least amenable to change because its accepted customs and ideas are worked into the very bone and sinew of the young in their most plastic period, becoming matters of habit surrounded with a halo of more or less tender emotions and memories. It is precisely those social mores closest to our daily lives that we are least capable of viewing with detachment and in due perspective.

THE GENS OR "HOUSE" AMONG ANCIENT PEOPLES

In ancient society there existed, in pure or modified form, the gens or "house"—the "great family." This kinship group consisted of all those men and *unmarried women* tracing descent to a real or mythical common ancestor. Genetic organization was more definitely developed in Greece and Rome than among the Aryan tribes of India, the Hebrews of Old Testament times, or the Mongolian race in China. Most sharply individualized was the Roman gens, which, according to Morgan,[1] had the following rights and obligations:

I. Mutual rights of succession to the property of deceased gentiles (i.e., members of the gens).
II. The possession of a common burial place.
III. Common religious rites; *sacra gentilicia.*
IV. The obligation not to marry in the gens.
V. The possession of lands in common.
VI. Reciprocal obligations of help, defense, and redress of injuries.
VII. The right to bear the gentile name (i.e., family surname).
VIII. The right to adopt strangers into the gens.
IX. The right to elect and depose its chiefs.

The members of the gens both in Greece and Rome shared in common the family burial place and worshiped the same domestic gods. In their early history these peoples were unquestionably ancestor worshipers; but certain contemporary historians are inclined to believe that crude ancestor worship gave way among the Romans of the late Republic and the Empire to the cult of domestic gods—the Lares and Penates and Vesta, goddess of the hearth.[2] Both Greeks and Romans safeguarded the gentile name; yet when a family line was threatened with extinction, adoption of sons from outside the gens was freely resorted to. By appropriate ceremonies youths were solemnly admitted into the gens of their adoptive fathers and thenceforth worshiped his ancestors and domestic gods. Since adoption of sons was a widespread custom in ancient society, the tradition that the gentile group was descended from a common ancestor and was thus one in ties of blood was, to a considerable extent, a fiction.

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[1] Lewis H. Morgan, *Ancient Society* (Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1878), p. 285.

Finally, something should be said of two other firmly rooted customs in the Greek and Roman gentes. Each kinship group acknowledged one chief, who was probably elected from among the oldest and most esteemed heads of individual families. In this way the gens was held together as a firmly knit whole and administered in accordance with a sacred tradition. The system of reckoning relationship was that of *agnation,* that is, the arrangement whereby all those descended *in the male line* from a chosen lineal ancestor were recognized as agnates or kinsmen within the gens, while all descendants of women were excluded. The reason for this exclusion lay in the fact that a Greek or Roman woman lost her membership in the gens of her father at marriage and was admitted to the gens of her husband, thus ceasing to be *legally* a member of her father's family. Hence the saying in ancient Rome that a woman is the terminus of the family—*Mulier est finis familiæ.*[3] In the late years of the Roman Republic this custom died out and a married woman remained a member of her father's family and gens.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ANCIENT PATRIARCHAL FAMILY

Ancestor Worship.

The family in ancient times was patriarchal in character—that is, it was ruled by its oldest male head, whose will was law. Essential to the maintenance of the patriarchal family was the institution of ancestor worship. Among Hindus, Chinese, Greeks, and Romans we find this custom deeply rooted and one of the most solid supports of paternal power. It is customary for the Chinese "great families" to build temples to their ancestors, and at these temples representatives of "joint families" gather periodically to prostrate themselves before the ancestral tablets which commemorate their honored dead. In every orthodox Chinese home is a shrine containing stone or wooden tablets on which are inscribed the names of deceased ascendants, and twice each year, on the days of the birth and death of the departed, offerings of burning incense and eatables are spread before the shrine, while the living descendants make obeisances and prostrate themselves before the tablets. Similar ceremonies in commemoration of ancestors are an ancient custom in India, where also there early appeared the sacred hearth-fire round which many religious ceremonies of a domestic nature took place. "Agni," says the Hindu *Rig Veda,* "must be invoked before all other gods."

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[2] See W. W. Fowler, *Religious Experience of the Roman People,* pp. 72–86.

[3] See Sir Henry Maine, *Ancient Law* (1894 ed., Henry Holt and Company, New York), p. 148.

In Greece and Rome, as in Oriental countries, the authority of the oldest male head of the family was enormously enhanced by the institution of ancestor worship and its observances secured the complete unity of the family organization. Fustel De Coulanges [4] maintains that the essential bond of both the Greek and Roman family "was the religion of the sacred fire and of dead ancestors. This caused the family to form a single body both in this life and the next." In the midst of the Greek and Roman home was the domestic hearth, the fire of which was carefully tended by the wife and mother. This hearth was for many centuries the very nucleus of household life among these peoples. Round the sacred hearth and the altar to the domestic gods occurred most of the solemn ceremonials that were believed to propitiate the spirits of gods and ancestors and assure the welfare of the home.

It is a noteworthy fact that in all societies where ancestor worship became deeply rooted, the patriarch, or oldest male head of the family, was the high priest in conducting the domestic ceremonies. In India and Greece the women had little or no part in the ritual save as passive onlookers. In Rome, however, the wife and children shared with the father in the worship of the hearth-gods and ancestors. Not only was it necessary that the Roman wife serve as priestess with her husband in all the sacrifices and rites of domestic worship, but the boys and girls of the family assisted in these ceremonials as *camilli* and *camillæ.* Nevertheless the more important rôle played by the father did much to assure to him, in Rome as elsewhere, a degree of power and prestige that, despite some modifications, persisted almost to modern times.

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[4] *The Ancient City,* pp. 51, 52.

Power of the Patriarch.

The vast authority of the patriarch did not rest on ancestor worship alone. Great prestige accrued to the man in ancient society, as in primitive, from the fact that he was the fighter, the protector of life and property within the nation and the family. Thanks to his physical power, he wielded tremendous social power in a world where physical force and endurance counted for much. Then, too, the economic factor enhanced his authority. Among all ancient peoples—Hindus, Chinese, Hebrews, Greeks, Romans—the male was the chief provider of food and raw materials. He was the farmer, the raiser of wool and flax, the metal-worker, the craftsman, the merchant. To women was assigned the rôle of transforming crude products into usable goods within the home. Although the women as spinners, weavers, makers of garments, and preparers of food have, from earliest times, been indispensable contributors to economic life, the fact that they were dependent upon the outdoor labors of men for the commodities which they worked over doubtless accounts for the fact that their economic value was never justly estimated in ancient society and in consequence their economic status was almost universally one of dependence.

For all these reasons, then, patriarchal power appears to have been well-nigh absolute, especially in ancient Rome, where the *patria potestas* attained its extreme expression. In the words of Sir Henry Maine, "in all the relations created by Private Law, the son lived under a domestic despotism which, considering the severity it retained to the last and the number of centuries through which it endured, constitutes one of the strangest problems in legal history." [5] The Roman father had the power of life and death over his children as well as that of unlimited corporal punishment. He could secure a wife for his son and give his daughter in marriage. Patriarchal power also involved the right of the father to divorce his son against his will, to transfer a son by the ceremony called *emancipatio* to another family which desired to adopt him, and to hold and control all family property. This meant that even a grown son, who might hold public office as priest or magistrate, could own no property, real or personal, independently of his father, who was entitled to take all his son's belongings and to enjoy the benefits of his contracts. Probably few Roman fathers exercised these extreme rights to the full, but the law would have sustained them in such exercise, even if public opinion had been unfavorable. In the grim words of the Laws of the Twelve Tables, which date from about 450 B. C., the father has the *right during the entire lifetime of his children* "to imprison, scourge, keep to rustic labor in chains, to sell or slay, even though they may be in the enjoyment of high state offices." [6] On the other hand it can scarcely be doubted that paternal affection, together with humane public opinion, combined to make the relation between father and son endurable and at times even friendly.

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[5] Maine, *op. cit.*, pp. 137–138. By permission of Henry Holt and Company, publishers.

The Status of Women under the Patriarchal System.

The subjection of children to paternal power in the ancient family was paralleled by the subordination of women. Writing of the position of women in the Roman patriarchal family, Sir Henry Maine emphasizes the institution of perpetual tutelage "under which a Female, though relieved from her Parent's authority by his decease, continues subject through life to her nearest male relations, or to her father's nominees, as her Guardians. Perpetual Guardianship is obviously neither more or less than an artificial prolongation of the Patria Potestas, when for other purposes it had been dissolved." [7] Unquestionably this custom of guardianship, even of mature married women, was in large measure due to the fact that Roman women were denied the right to absolute ownership and disposal of property. The blunt words of Gaius, the Roman jurist of the second century A. D., are worth quoting in this connection: "In general it should be noted that those who are in another's power, whether *potestas, manus* or *mancipium,* can have nothing granted to them in law; for since they have no control over their own persons, it follows, of course, that they can claim nothing as being their own in law." [8]

In early times (prior to the second century B. C.) a Roman girl at marriage merely passed from the authority of her father (*patria potestas*) to that of her husband, called *manus*. Marriage dissolved her legal relationship to her own family and made her a member of her husband's family. From this time forth she worshiped her husband's household gods instead of her father's and came under the authority of the patriarch of her husband's family. In modern eyes, *manus,* or the power of the husband, seems ruthlessly absolute. Sitting in judgment upon his wife, the husband might condemn her to death for a capital offense, provided he first summoned a tribunal of her male relatives and his own and laid the question before them. He had the right to kill his wife with his own hands if he discovered her in adultery. Furthermore, the Roman husband was granted almost unlimited powers of chastisement and correction of his wife; and he could sell her labor (if not her person) to indemnify himself for any fines she had incurred, which he was obliged by law to pay.

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[6] Paul Monroe, *Source Book of the History of Education for the Greek and Roman Period,* p. 337. The quotation is a digest of fragments of the ancient laws.

[7] Maine, *op. cit.,* p. 153.

[8] *Institutes of Roman Law,* II, 96.

It is all the more surprising, then, to learn that the matron of Rome was a highly respected person with considerable authority over household affairs and the upbringing of her children. Despite the harshness of the early laws, it cannot be questioned that a dignified, law-abiding Roman wife and mother held an honored place within the household over which she presided. She was looked upon as the custodian of the family honor and co-partner with her husband, alike in domestic worship and in the education of their children. James Bryce, in his valuable study of *Marriage and Divorce under Roman and English Law,* clearly brings out the contrast between the legal subordination of the Roman wife and the dignified position she held in the family: "One can hardly imagine a more absolute subjection to one person of another person who was nevertheless not only free but respected and influential, as we know that the wife in old Rome was." [9]

BETROTHAL AND MARRIAGE

Conceptions of Marriage.

In all forms of the patriarchal family from Rome to India the prevailing conceptions of marriage and even the nuptial rites reveal striking similarities. Everywhere marriage was held in the highest esteem and regarded as a cardinal social duty. Rarely could an unmarried adult be found in ancient civilization, and such a one was looked down upon as having evaded his primary obligations to society and to his gens. A man or woman in Rome, Greece, or India held with intensity the conviction that the family name must not be permitted to die out; and, above all, that the ancestral spirits must be reverenced and worshiped in order that the "great family" of the living and the dead might be united by strong spiritual bonds. In these days of individual choice in marriage for personal ends and satisfactions, it is a little difficult to imagine those ancient times, when the marital relation was viewed almost solely as a means of perpetuating and unifying the family and (in Greece and Rome) of furnishing loyal citizens to the state.

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[9] Rt. Hon. James Bryce, in *Studies in History and Jurisprudence* (Clarendon Press), p. 790. By permission of the Oxford University Press.

Since marriage in patriarchal society was an institution of great religious and civic importance, it is not surprising to learn that its control was kept firmly within the hands of adults, that is, of the father. Although the patriarch might consult with his wife regarding the disposal of their children in marriage, the final decision rested with him. In India, Greece, and Rome the fathers of marriageable youths and maidens carried on negotiations among themselves, helped by information and advice from friends. In China and Japan, however, professional "marriage-brokers" or go-betweens were (and are) employed to inform parents concerning eligible young men and women of respectable families with some property who might meet parental requirements with regard to a son-in-law or daughter-in-law. In the ancient Chinese classic called the *She-King* [10] we read:

"How do we proceed in taking a wife?
Without a go-between it cannot be done."

When son or daughter in ancient society was emerging from childhood, his or her betrothal and marriage became a matter of profound concern to parents. In India, infant betrothals and child marriages were common owing to the Laws of Manu, which prescribed that a father was responsible for the marriage of his daughter before puberty. If her father had failed to provide her with a husband three years after she was physically mature, a woman might choose whom she would —a startling invasion of parental power that reveals the paramount importance attached by the Hindus to early marriage.

Some evidences of marriage by purchase may be found in the ancient Vedas—the sacred epics of India. Thus we read that the daughter of the Prince of Madras was purchased as a wife with gold and precious stones. Evidently the custom had persisted into later times, for the Laws of Manu seek to discourage the practice and, although recognizing purchase marriage, rank it as one of the four blameworthy forms.[11] It is quite possible, also, that purchase marriage existed among Greeks, Romans, and Chinese in prehistoric times. However, with the advance of civilization, the crude custom of the sale of the wife (if it had once existed) had given way to the more civilized practice of making gifts to the bride or, as in Greece and Rome, of setting aside property as her "dower" which reverted to her family after her death. But the gifts or dower provided by the suitor were frequently more than matched by the dowry demanded of every girl whose father sought for her a husband. No custom is more strongly entrenched in ancient society than that of providing a marriageable girl with a dowry. Without it she could not hope to marry. Hence the frantic efforts of father, mother, and even distant relatives to accumulate the necessary amount before the girl reached marriageable age. No doubt this entailed much hardship upon poor families and is one of the chief reasons why, even up to modern times, the girl baby in India is looked upon as a misfortune.

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[10] Quoted in Hobhouse, *Morals in Evolution* (Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1915), p. 194, footnote.

It will readily be seen that the economic aspect of marriage loomed large in ancient society. Parents sought to make a good financial settlement for their children and were not at all above dickering over the amount of property that the girls should bring as dowry or that the man should set aside for his wife. Everywhere marriage was looked upon as a *private contract* between the families concerned. Our modern view that the marital relation is a matter of such importance to society that it should be carefully regulated by the state would have met with short shrift in ancient civilization. In the earliest times neither the state nor religion attempted to curtail the power of the father to marry his children when he chose and to whom he saw fit, to arrange the marriage contract as he wished, and to conduct the nuptial rites privately within the home with or without the services of priests. Nor was there public regulation of divorce in patriarchal society until late in the culture history of these countries. Divorce, like marriage, was a private affair, and so remained for many centuries.

One further characteristic of marriage in patriarchal society deserves brief consideration. In Greece and Rome a woman at marriage lost legal membership in her parents' family and joined the family of her husband. The reason for this custom is not far to seek. In separating herself from the household of her father she was no longer directly under his power but had passed under the *potestas* of her husband or his father if living. The Roman word *familia,* from which our word "family" is derived, originally signified the members of a man's household (including slaves) who were under his power (*sub potestate*). Certain consequences followed from a woman's loss of family membership at her marriage. In the first place she abandoned all right to inherit a share of the family property at her father's death. Her dowry was supposed to represent her portion; therefore the estate of her father was equally divided among his widow, his sons, and his *unmarried daughters*. A further consequence of a Roman or Greek girl's marriage was that in entering her husband's family she assumed the duty of worshiping his domestic gods. Thus the young Roman or Greek bride faced the triple loss of family membership, of the familiar domestic religion of her kinsmen, and of all rights of inheritance in her father's property.

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[11] These were purchase, capture, voluntary choice in marriage, and treacherous seduction.

Betrothal Customs in Rome.

Within the limits of this book it is impossible to discuss betrothal and marriage practices in all the countries where the patriarchal family flourished. Since Rome was the center for the spread of Christianity, which exerted a profound influence upon the development of marriage and family relations in the barbarian nations of Western Europe, it seems desirable to select for special study the betrothal and marriage customs among the Roman people.

Let us imagine, then, that a patrician father in Rome has a young daughter of an age to be betrothed. The first concern of this father will be to find a future husband for his daughter with whom the legal marriage called *matrimonium justum* can be celebrated. This form of union carried with it the full rights of the offspring to inherit their father's property and to be granted, in due time, all the rights of Roman citizenship. On the other hand *matrimonium non justum,* although a valid marriage, was irregular and frequently worked hardship to the children. Such marriages were contracted between Roman citizens and those of lower social rank, as freedwomen, actors, and gladiators. The children of these unions, although legitimate, were not admitted to the gens of the father and took the social position of the parent of humbler degree. Thus they had no legal right to inherit the property or to fall heir to the rights of citizenship which belonged to the parent who was a full Roman citizen.

When a Roman father had found a suitable mate for his daughter, usually by inquiring among his friends, he then entered into negotiations with the young man's father on the all-important question of the amount of dowry his daughter would be expected to furnish at her marriage. No doubt some shrewd bargaining commonly preceded a Roman marriage. But, these matters once adjusted, it was customary for the betrothal (*sponsalia*) to follow in a short time. Roman girls were betrothed at a very early age; indeed, Cicero speaks of betrothing his daughter Tullia when she was ten years old, although she was not married until three years later; and this was not at all unusual. Betrothal in Rome was a formal ceremony in which the girl was promised to the man as his bride at some future time. It is interesting to note that the promise was made, not by the young people themselves, but by their parents for them, since both the girl and the youth were probably *in potestate* and their consent was taken for granted. However, if the man were *sui juris,* i.e., freed from paternal power and his own master, the promise of the girl's father was made directly to him. This formal betrothal agreement was not held by the Romans to be legally binding; therefore neither party could sue the other for breach of contract, although it was considered disgraceful to enter into a second engagement before the first had been broken. After the promise had been given, presents were usually exchanged. Quite often these were articles for personal use; but in Christian times it became common for the man to give his betrothed a ring, which was worn on the third finger of the left hand. Then followed a banquet in the home of the girl's father, and the *sponsalia* were celebrated as a family holiday.

Marriage Rites.

Shortly after the Roman girl had attained puberty, the marriage ceremony took place on a day carefully chosen so as to avoid all evil omens. According to ancient usage, the *consensus,* or consent of the parties to the union, was the most important step in marriage; but be it noted once more, that this consent was not given by the actual contracting parties but by their parents. Probably few youths and fewer maidens ever dared to assert their personal wishes against the will of the father, which, until late in Imperial times, was absolute. The nuptial rites began in the home of the bride's father, which had been gaily decked with flowers and branches of trees for the occasion. Although historians differ on this point, it seems probable that the auspices were first taken in the bride's home. A sheep was killed and the entrails examined by the augurs. If the omens proved favorable, the bride, wearing a flame-colored veil and attended by the groom, then entered the atrium, where the wedding guests were assembled. The consent of the heads of the two families to the marriage was then formally expressed and, in the later period, the contract (*tabula*) with respect to the girl's *dos,* or dowry, and the *donatio* granted by the groom was formally agreed to and sealed by those present as witnesses. On many art monuments of Rome may be seen these *tabulæ* in the bridegrooms' hands.

Then followed wedding festivities which continued until sundown. In the early evening it was customary for the groom to take his girl bride from her mother's arms and escort her in gay procession (*deductio*) through the streets to his own home. At the head were the torch-bearers and the flute-players, and behind walked the relatives and friends of the bride and groom. Important members of this ceremonial procession were the *pronubæ,* or Roman matrons only once married, whose office it was to lead the bride to the marriage couch, and the three young boys who attended the bride, two holding each a hand and the third carrying before her the wedding torch of white thorn. Behind the bride were carried the distaff and spindle, symbols of her domestic duties. Through the streets passed the brilliant procession singing marriage hymns abounding in gross jests and personal allusions and shouting, from time to time, the ancient marriage cry whose meaning had long been lost in the dim obscurity of the past. At the door of the bridegroom's home the gathering stopped while the bride wound the doorposts with wool and anointed the door with oil. No doubt the first act symbolized her duties as mistress of the household and the second was a symbol of the plenty which it was hoped the gods would send upon this new home. These symbolic acts performed, the groom carefully lifted his bride over the threshold, thus avoiding the unlucky omen of a stumble on the part of the girl. Some writers, however, explain this act as the last survival of an age when Romans won their wives by capture. It has also been explained as a ceremonial introduction of the bride to the household gods of her husband's family. Whatever be the interpretation of the act, it was followed by a significant little ceremony. The bride turned to the groom and with quiet dignity repeated the ancient formula: *Ubi tu Caius ego Caia,* thus signifying that where he was master she was mistress.

Up to this point the nuptial rites of the Romans were much the same whatever form of ceremony was chosen. But quite early Rome had developed three marriage forms, all of which were recognized as binding. These were (1) *confarreatio,* (2) *coemptio,* (3) *usus.* Only patricians might use the first form, which was a solemn religious rite. Plebeians were never permitted to marry by *confarreatio* and if a patrician married a plebeian he forfeited the right to use this religious ceremony. The marriage form peculiar to *confarreatio* consisted in certain religious rites which were celebrated under the direction of the chief priest (*Pontifex Maximus*) and the *Flamen Dialis* [12] in the presence of ten witnesses who represented the ten gentes of Rome. The auspices were taken and were followed by two acts of solemn significance: first, a sacred cake made from the grain called *far* was given to the bride and groom, who ate it together; and, secondly, the hands of the young couple were joined by the priest. As Becker points out, the wall paintings and sarcophagi depicting marriage all show this rite of joining hands, which was probably common to all marriages. But the succeeding ceremony was peculiar to *confarreatio.* The newly married pair seated themselves for a time upon two seats covered with a sheepskin, thus signifying that they were united by a single bond, however different might be their functions within the family. These symbolic rites were succeeded by the wedding banquet—probably a gay and lengthy affair—terminated only when the *pronubæ* approached the bride and led her to the marriage bed, which had been carried into the atrium on the wedding day. Long after Rome had become a highly civilized nation it was customary for the *pronubæ* to stand before the door of the bridal chamber singing those hymeneal songs (*Fescennina*) that, in modern ears, sound strangely coarse and even indecent. On the morning after the marriage the young wife began her life as mistress of the household by offering a sacrifice to the domestic gods of her husband at the family altar.

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[12] Priest of Jupiter.

In marriage under the form of *coemptio,* no religious rites were used, although the ceremonies of the wedding procession, the lifting of the bride over the threshold, the salutation, *Ubi tu Caius ego Caia,* the taking of the auspices, and the joining of hands remained the same. The bride was brought *in manum* (under her husband's power) by a symbolic sale which may have been a relic of purchase marriage, although this fact is not fully established. In the presence of at least five witnesses, a single coin of small value was placed by the groom in the scales held by a man called the *libripens*. This little ceremony was followed by the joining of hands and the publicly expressed consent of the couple to the marriage. Probably a prayer was then recited and a sacrifice offered, after which came the banquet and the wedding festivities.

We know less of the special ceremonies characteristic of *usus* than of the other two. Probably the wedding procession, the joining of hands, and the words of consent were all used. But the woman was brought *in manum* merely by living for a year in her husband's house without leaving it for three successive days. It is interesting to note that, in Imperial times, the forms peculiar to *confarreatio* and *coemptio* had largely fallen into disuse, owing to the breakdown of the custom of marriage *cum mano*. "Free marriage" became almost universal and the ancient forms that put the wife under the power of her husband finally disappeared from the Roman nuptial ceremony, save in the marriage of priests.

CHANGES IN THE PATRIARCHAL FAMILY IN ROME

The Position of the Wife.

In the long course of centuries the status of the wife changed scarcely at all in Greece and in Oriental lands. But a marked improvement in the position of women took place in Roman society after the wars with *Carthage* (264–249 B. C. and 219–202 B. C.). Emerging triumphant from this long-drawn-out struggle for supremacy over an ancient foe, the aggressive Romans soon embarked upon those imperialistic wars which vastly enlarged their territories and enriched their treasury at the expense of the conquered provinces. Roman fathers of the patrician class became wealthy and powerful and no longer were willing to comply with the established custom whereby all the property, both real and personal, bestowed upon their daughters as a marriage dowry became the absolute possession of their husbands. Therefore it came about, as we have seen, that the marriage ceremonies which brought a Roman girl under *manus* gradually fell into disuse in the last two centuries of the Republic and so-called "free marriage" took its place. This meant that a woman no longer passed into the family of her husband at her marriage, but remained a member of her own and thus continued under the *potestas* of her father. But this was not all. Although the husband still retained the right to administer his wife's dowry and enjoy the income therefrom, the absolute ownership resided in his wife's father. Moreover, if a Roman girl at marriage were given the life use of property in addition to the dowry, she might enjoy the income quite independently of her husband. To be sure, the management of her property remained in the hands of her father or a guardian appointed by him at his death; nevertheless the possession of an income of her own spelled economic freedom for many a Roman matron of the official class. It is not strange, therefore, that their new financial independence led them to demand larger privileges, rights, and opportunities. During the first centuries of the Empire, wealthy Roman matrons were to all intents and purposes free individuals. They were often as well educated as the men; they mingled without let or hindrance in the decadent social life of the period; and they even "rooted" for their favorite candidates before an election. In the patrician class, the authority of the husband had dwindled to a mere shadow. Indeed, the wealthy married woman may, at times, have been unpleasantly domineering. "Why have I not a rich wife?" asks the Roman poet Martial. "Because I do not wish to be my wife's maid."

Economic Changes.

But the enormous influx of wealth into the public treasury and the private purses of Rome had other far-reaching effects upon Roman life, especially in the family. Gradually the lands of the small agriculturists were bought up by opulent military and civil officers, and the free farming class, so respected in early Roman times, joined the growing body of the proletariat—a restless, dissatisfied mass of wage-earners who were kept quiet by free gifts of oil, wine, bread, and seats at the circus, the expense of which was met by the Imperial treasury. Not only did Rome thereby lose its sturdy, hard-working, and self-respecting farmers, but in their stead it had developed an idle, pleasure-loving class of landowners whose country villas were marvels of luxury. The largest of these estates were worked by thousands of slaves, whose labor was minutely specialized. In addition to those who worked on the farms were skilled gamekeepers, poulterers, gardeners, cooks, bakers, tailors, and handicraftsmen of every sort whose labor made a country villa a self-sufficient economic unit. Thus, instead of a republic of small farmers, Rome became an empire sharply divided into a wealthy landowning class, who disdained manual labor, and a body of discontented wage-earners. The middle class of traders and manufacturers was relatively small and uninfluential.

Decline in the Marriage Rate and Birth Rate.

Such profound economic changes could not take place without a marked reaction upon social and family life. Little by little the early ideas and customs with respect to marriage underwent a transformation. By the time of Cicero (d. 53 B. C.) marriage was no longer held in high esteem; and the marriage rate was falling so rapidly that it became a matter of deep concern to the Roman Emperors of a later day. Even as early as 131 B. C., the Roman censor, Metellus Macedonicus, had publicly exhorted Roman men to marry. But his appeal clearly reflects the cynical attitude that generally prevailed with regard to the marriage relation—a cynicism in sharp contrast to the former reverence. "If we could do without wives," he declares, "we should be rid of that nuisance; but since nature has decreed that we can neither live comfortably with them nor live at all without them, we must e'en look rather to our permanent interests than to a passing pleasure." The exhortations of public men, however, and even the rewards offered by Julius Cæsar to encourage marriage, had little effect in inducing Roman men to take unto themselves wives. Men and women of the wealthy patrician class were more and more absorbed in living lives of pleasure and excitement and less and less inclined to assume the responsibilities of marriage and family life. In the decadent society of the Empire sexual satisfaction could be easily secured without entailing irksome cares and duties.

Not only was there a serious decrease in the number of marriages, but there followed a corresponding decline in the birth rate. Ignorant of methods of preventing conception, pleasure-loving parents freely resorted to abortion and infanticide as means of relieving themselves of the responsibilities of parenthood, once so highly cherished. Infants of high and low degree were ruthlessly exposed if the father declined to acknowledge them or the mother were unwilling to assume their care. Unquestionably the practice was much more common than in an earlier period, even though it had always been permitted by law. In course of time the lack of legitimate children to inherit the estates of men of the senatorial class assumed such serious proportions that these patricians resorted to two devices to secure heirs. They either formally adopted sons, or they left their property to men called "clients," who were not above fawning upon them and playing the sycophant with an eye to a rich bequest. So open and shameless did this practice become that Ammianus Marcellinus, writing in the fourth century A. D., declares: "Some persons look on everything as worthless which is born outside the walls of the capital save only the childless and the unmarried. Nor can it be conceived with what a variety of obsequious observance men without children are courted at Rome." [13]

Such a state of affairs was deeply disturbing to the Emperor Augustus, who sought to curb these social tendencies by legal enactments. To this end he induced the Senate to enact the law called the *Lex Julia et Papia Poppœa,* passed, in final form, in 9 A. D. This law was specifically designed to increase both the marriage rate and the birth rate by penalizing celibacy and childlessness. It decreed that unmarried women between twenty and fifty years of age and bachelors between twenty-five and sixty were disqualified to inherit any property bequeathed to them by will unless they married within 100 days. Such property reverted to the state. Moreover, childless couples were mulcted of half the amount of a bequest. On the other hand, married men with children were given the preference in appointments to public office.

Unfaithfulness in marriage was so common in the Augustan age that the *Lex Julia de adulteriis* was enacted about 17 B. C. This statute represented a revision of the ancient laws and practices with respect to infidelity in marriage. By the terms of this law a husband lost the right to kill his wife if he surprised her in an act of unfaithfulness, although he might kill her seducer under certain conditions, carefully laid down.

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[13] Quoted in Davis, *The Influence of Wealth in Imperial Rome* (The Macmillan Company, New York and London, 1910), p. 298. By permission.

The father of the wife taken in adultery might, however, kill both his daughter and her paramour, again under conditions which led to much legal hairsplitting. The law further provided that an unfaithful wife should lose half her dowry and one third of her property and be banished to a lonely island. Likewise a husband guilty of adultery must forfeit half his property and suffer banishment.[14] One of the first Roman women to pay the penalties laid down in the new law was Julia, daughter of Augustus himself, who was banished to the lonely island of Pandatoria, where she later died of starvation.

However well-intentioned these laws may have been, they signally failed of their purpose—to increase marriage and child-bearing and to decrease unfaithfulness in marriage. Many years after the *Lex Julia et Papia Poppœa* had been enacted, the historian Tacitus tells us that the law had proved worthless to encourage marriage and the rearing of offspring, "so powerful were the attractions of a childless state." In this modern age, when highly civilized nations are also confronted with a falling birth rate, it is not without profit to consider whether legislation will settle our problem any more satisfactorily than it did that of Imperial Rome. The causes of a falling birth rate are various and by no means always selfish; and it has yet to be proved that these causative factors are reached and prevented by legal enactments.

Family Life and Education.

When marriage is held in low esteem and when men and women are too bent upon pleasure to care much about children, family education is obviously bound to suffer. And such was the case in Imperial Rome. In the early centuries of the Republic, when life was stern and simple, parents felt a deep sense of responsibility for the education of their children. Tacitus bears witness to the wholesome character of family education in early Rome:

> The infant, as soon as born, was not consigned to the mean dwelling of a hireling nurse, but was reared and cherished in the bosom of the mother, whose highest praise it was to take care of her household affairs, and attend to her children. It was customary, likewise, for each family to choose some elderly female relation of approved conduct, to whose charge the children were committed. In her presence not one indecent word was uttered; nothing

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[14] See article on "Adulterium" in Smith's *Dictionary of Classical Antiquities.*

> was done against propriety and good manners. The hours of study and serious employment were settled by her direction; and not only so, but even the diversions of the children were conducted with modest reserve and sanctity of manners. Thus it was that Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi, superintended the education of her illustrious issue. It was thus that Aurelia trained up Julius Cæsar; and thus Atia formed the mind of Augustus.[15]

Having thus described the wholesome family education of children in early Rome, Tacitus reverses the picture and shows us what home influences had become in Imperial times.

> In the present age what is our practice? The infant is committed to a Greek chambermaid and a slave or two, chosen for the purpose, generally the worst of the whole household train and unfit for any office of trust. From the idle tales and gross absurdities of these people, the tender and uninstructed mind is suffered to receive its earliest impressions. Throughout the house not one servant cares what he says or does in the presence of his young master; and indeed, how should it be otherwise? since the parents themselves are so far from training their young families to virtue and modesty, that they set them the first examples of luxury and licentiousness. Thus our youth gradually acquire a confirmed habit of impudence, and a total disregard of that reverence they owe both to themselves and to others. To say truth, it seems as if a fondness for horses, actors and gladiators, the peculiar and distinguishing folly of this our city, was impressed upon them even in the womb; . . . Who talks of anything else in our houses? [16]

The renowned teacher of rhetoric, Quintilian, living in the first Christian century, lends the support of his testimony to that of Tacitus. "Would that we ourselves did not corrupt the morals of our children!" he laments. "We enervate their very infancy with luxuries. . . . We are delighted if they utter anything immodest. Expressions that would not be tolerated even from the effeminate youths of Alexandria, we hear from them with a smile and a kiss. Nor is this wonderful; we have taught them; they have heard such language from ourselves. They see our mistresses, our male objects of affection; every dining room rings with impure songs; things shameful to be told are objects of sight. From such practices springs habit, and afterwards nature." [17]

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[15] Tacitus, *Dialogue Concerning Oratory,* in Monroe, *Source Book in the History of Education* (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1921), p. 362. By permission.

[16] *Ibid.,* pp. 362–363.

[17] Quintilian, *Institutes of Oratory,* in Monroe, *Source Book in the History of Education,* p. 460.

DIVORCE IN IMPERIAL ROME

Such being the picture of family life in wealthy homes under the Empire, it is not surprising that divorce became so frequent as to constitute a public scandal. Roman men had always had the right to divorce their wives for certain grave offenses; but divorce did not become common until the second century B. C. Thereafter men in public positions led the way in getting rid of undesired wives. Cato, Cicero, Cæsar, Pompey, Antony and a score of other prominent men divorced their wives on trifling or unworthy pretexts. After Cicero's day, women exercised the same privilege, perhaps as freely as men. So numerous were the matrimonial experiences of some individuals that St. Jerome [18] in one of his writings referred to a man living with his twenty-first wife who was himself her twenty-second husband. No wonder that Tertullian, a Christian Father living in the second century, once bitterly remarked that "divorce is the first fruit of marriage."

More than one Roman Emperor tried to grapple with this social problem, but with small success. Their method consisted in imposing pecuniary penalties upon the guilty party in a divorce or upon the party responsible for a divorce on frivolous grounds. The law of Augustus, whereby an unfaithful wife forfeited one half her dowry and one third her property, was later modified so that the guilty woman lost one sixth of the dowry, with an added sixth for each child. This property accrued to the husband, upon whom fell the guardianship and support of the children of the union. If the husband were the culpable party, he was compelled to restore his wife's dowry entire.

It is highly interesting and significant that none of the Roman Emperors from Augustus to Justinian ever challenged the old theory that *divorce was a purely private matter* outside the scope of a judicial tribunal. Nor did they seriously interfere with the prevailing view that divorce should be as free as marriage. It was many centuries before Christianity was able to enforce its contrary doctrine that marriage is indissoluble, and then only with exceptions to be noted later.

DECLINE OF THE PATRIA POTESTAS

The gradual transformation of marriage and family life had been going on for two centuries before any weakening in the power of the father over his children became apparent. During the reign of Augustus the first step was taken toward lessening the absolute authority of the *paterfamilias*. A law was passed at this time which authorized a son under power to dispose by will of any property he had acquired in the exercise of his duties as a soldier. The Emperor Hadrian (r. 117–138 A. D.) extended this privilege to all men under paternal power who had been honorably discharged from military service. From this time on the tendency of the Emperors to limit the authority of the father became marked. Septimius Severus (146–211 A. D.) restricted the father's right of corporal punishment to moderate chastisement and decreed that for grave offenses against the law the son must be handed over to a judicial tribunal for trial. Yet, despite these mitigations of the authority of the Roman patriarch, up to the time of the Emperor Justinian (483–565 A. D.) a father had the right to expose his child or to sell it as a slave if he were destitute. During the reign of that Christian Emperor, however, the exposure of children was forbidden under severe penalties; the killing of a grown child was declared to be a crime making the father subject to the judicial penalty for murder; and the surrender of a son to an injured party in a civil suit in order to escape responsibility for the son's fines was prohibited. Muirhead declares that the ancient conception of the *familia* as an aggregate of persons completely subject to the family head had entirely disappeared by this time. Yet, even in the code of Justinian, the ancient right of the father to sell his son was recognized under two conditions, viz., if the father were destitute and the child an infant.

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[18] Lived in the fourth and early fifth centuries A. D.

The humane tendency to curb the tremendous power of the Roman patriarch was probably due in the main to the advance of civilization and the spread of gentler sentiments with regard to human relationships. But two other influences were at work to further the movement when it was once begun. During the first centuries of the Empire, the theory of a "natural law" grounded on justice, which should serve as a pattern for civil legislation, was becoming widely accepted among thoughtful men, who could not fail to observe the gross disparity between their enlightened conceptions of justice and the ideas animating the old laws with respect to paternal power. Another influence serving to ameliorate the harshness of ancient law was that of Christianity, which preached the equality of all men before God and sought to develop the gentler virtues among its members.

SERVICES OF THE PATRIARCHAL FAMILY TO CIVILIZATION

Although the patriarchal family was autocratic in organization, and often harsh and repressive in its workings; although women were legally more subjected under this system than in some primitive societies, yet this family type rendered very real services to civilization. In the first place the family was a strong, well-knit, orderly institution that endured through centuries of strife and warfare, serving as a model of peace and order in times of social upheaval. It is generally admitted that family law preceded and furnished patterns for the public laws that slowly developed with the growth of nations. Religion had its chief source in the patriarchal family, and it is probable that worship of the household gods was closer to the hearts of men and women than the cult of the national deities with its more elaborate ritual. Certain it is that the *sacra privata* in Rome yielded much more slowly to the advance of Christianity than the *sacra publica*. These private rites, which took place at the naming of children, at betrothals, marriages, and the assuming of the toga of manhood, were associated with the most sacred events of family life and were too deeply enshrined in the affections and memories of individuals to be easily supplanted. The patriarchal family also rendered valuable economic services. In it the division of labor on a sex basis had gone much further than in primitive society. To the woman were assigned tasks wholly within doors—the management of her household and the care of children; to the man fell the work of tilling the land and protecting the home in time of war. In a society based largely on domestic industry, such as that of patriarchal times, sex division of labor was inevitable; and its utility is shown by the fact that it persisted, with slight changes, down to modern times, when the economic organization of society was transformed by the effects of the Industrial Revolution.

The most important service of the patriarchal family was rendered as a nursery and school for the young. In most lands where this type of family flourished, the parents clearly recognized their responsibility for their offspring, although this responsibility was most seriously assumed among the ancient Hebrews and Romans. The family education of children in early Rome has already been described. The Roman home was a training school in precisely those virtues that would produce a stable and enduring society, viz., reverence for the gods and for the folkways of their ancestors, loyalty to the family and the state, and unquestioning obedience to those in authority. It will be seen that little room was given in these early homes for the free play of individuality. Not until far-reaching changes in economic and political conditions had occurred were family life and discipline so transformed as gradually to give larger scope to the individual to enjoy a free and meaningful life such as was difficult to achieve under the harsh restrictions of an earlier family custom.

TOPICS FOR REPORTS

1. The Influence of Marriage Customs upon the Character of Roman Women.
   J. Donaldson, *Woman: Her Position and Influence in Ancient Greece and Rome and among the Early Christians,* Book II, Chs. I, II, IV, V.
2. The Nurture and Education of Children in the Patriarchal Family.
   W. Goodsell, *A History of Marriage and the Family,* pp. 76–79, 106–110, 129–133, 150–154.
3. Divorce and Its Regulation in Ancient Society.
   Goodsell, *op. cit.,* pp. 70–74, 98–101, 125–127, 144–148.
4. The Influence of Wealth upon the Roman Family.
   W. S. Davis, *The Influence of Wealth in Imperial Rome* (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1910), Ch. VII and pp. 205–217.
5. The Augustan Laws Respecting Celibacy, Childlessness, and Adultery.
   Harper's *Dictionary of Classical Literature and Antiquities.* Articles on the *Lex Julia et Papia Poppœa, Lex Julia de Adulteriis, and Divortuum.*
6. Family Life in Imperial Rome.
   W. S. Davis, *A Day in Old Rome; A Picture of Roman Life* (Allyn and Bacon, Boston, 1925), pp. 54–74.

ADDITIONAL SELECTED READINGS

1. Bryce, James, "Marriage and Divorce under Roman and English Law" in *Studies in History and Jurisprudence* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1901), pp. 782–859.
2. Couch, Herbert N., "Woman in Early Roman Law," *Harvard Law Review,* Vol. VIII (1895), pp. 39–50.
3. Davis, Wm. S., *A Day in Old Rome; A Picture of Roman Life* (Allyn and Bacon, Boston, 1925), pp. 54–74.
4. Ferrero, Guglielmo, "Woman and Marriage in Ancient Rome," *The Century Magazine,* Vol. 82, May, 1911.
5. Fowler, W. W., *Social Life at Rome in the Days of Cicero* (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1915), Chs. V, VII, VIII.

6. McDaniell, W. B., *Roman Private Life and Its Survivals* (Marshall Jones Company, Boston, 1924), Chs. I–X.
7. Muirhead, James, *Historical Introduction to the Private Law of Rome* (A. and C. Black, London, 1899), pp. 355–391.
8. Preston, H. W., and Dodge, L., *The Private Life of the Romans* (Chicago, 1930), Chs. I–III.

CHAPTER III

THE INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY ON MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY IN IMPERIAL ROME

VIEWS OF THE CHURCH FATHERS REGARDING MARRIAGE: INFLUENCE OF ASCETICISM AND DECADENCE

AFTER Christianity was recognized as one of the state religions by the Emperor Constantine in 313 A. D., its influence became increasingly powerful in the sphere of marriage and family relations. It is important, therefore, to have a clear understanding of the way in which the early Christian Fathers regarded marriage. Fortunately the writings of Tertullian, St. Jerome, and St. Augustine contain frequent references to the marriage relation, as do those of the earlier Church Fathers. Therefore the student of social history has no difficulty in forming an adequate conception of the attitude of Christian leaders toward marriage. For the first two centuries of our era, this attitude was mildly favorable—certainly not condemnatory. By the time of Tertullian (155–222 A. D.), the views of the Church Fathers were already strongly tinctured by that distrust of marriage, that tendency to regard it as a necessary substitute for fornication, that is so conspicuous in the writings of St. Jerome a century and a half later. In Tertullian's *Letter to His Wife* he says: "We do not indeed forbid the union of man and woman, blest by God as the seminary of the human race . . . and therefore permitted. . . . What, however, is better than this 'good' we learn from the apostle who *permits* marrying, indeed, but prefers abstinence. . . . In fact in that it is written 'To marry is better than to burn,' what, pray, is the nature of the 'good' which is [only] commanded by comparison with evil, so that the reason why marrying is *more* good is [merely] that 'burning' is less? Nay, but how far better is it neither to marry nor to burn?" [1]

This passage not only shows the increasing disfavor into which marriage was falling, but also points to one source of this disapprobation in the oft-quoted statement of St. Paul, "It is better to marry than to burn." That this most influential of the early leaders of the Church more than once expressed his disfavor of marriage and appeared to hold it in low esteem proved to be a potent factor in lessening the regard in which later Fathers held the institution. Had St. Paul been a happy married man instead of a bachelor, it is possible that the Christian leaders who followed him might have adopted a more friendly attitude toward matrimony.

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[1] *Ante-Nicene Christian Library,* Vol. XI, pp. 280–282.

But other social influences were at work to lower the regard in which wedlock was held by the Fathers. From the middle of the fourth century, asceticism gained an increasing hold on the minds of Christians and exerted a profound influence in opposition to marriage. This doctrine, of course, advocated the mortification of the flesh to secure the purification of the spirit, and taught that the ruthless suppression of all natural desires was the surest way to win the favor of God and eternal happiness hereafter. Both St. Jerome and St. Augustine taught the superior purity of celibacy and placed marriage lowest in the scale of virtue, regarding it as inferior both to celibacy and to the condition of the widowed man or woman who refrained from remarriage. St. Jerome exhorts a young Roman girl who had embraced a life of perpetual virginity not to "court the company of married ladies. . . . Learn in this a holy pride; know that you are better than they."[2] And in his treatise *Against Jovinian,* this influential Father does not hesitate to say "It is good to marry simply because it is bad to burn." Likewise St. Augustine, writing to the Lady Juliana about 416 A. D., congratulated her that her young daughter Demetrias had turned from an earthly marriage to "the spiritual embrace of that Husband who is fairer than the sons of men, and in espousing themselves to whom virgins retain their virginity, and gain more abundant spiritual fruitfulness."[3]

When the Fathers of the Church themselves looked askance at marriage as a remedy for fornication it is not surprising that, with the rapid spread of asceticism in the West, the married state was regarded by many Christian teachers as a refuge for those men and women too weak spiritually to embrace the ascetic life. Yet the Church never condemned marriage; the teachings of Christ were too clearly in support of it, and even St. Paul, at times, lends marriage a somewhat doubtful sanction.[4] But the exaltation of celibacy as a holier state than matrimony and more pleasing to God dealt a blow at the dignity and purity of marriage from which it had not recovered at the close of the Middle Ages. On this point Howard writes: "History all too plainly shows that the benefits conferred by monasticism and the enforced celibacy of the secular clergy come far short of balancing the evils flowing from the conception of wedlock as a 'remedy for concupiscence.' The influence of the church did, indeed, tend to condemn the breach of conjugal fidelity by the husband as equally sinful with that of the wife; although this righteous principle has by no means always been observed in Christian legislation. On the other hand *celibacy bred a contempt for womanhood and assailed the integrity of the family.*" [5]

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[2] Letter *To Eustochium* in *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers,* Vol. VI, pp. 28–30.

[3] *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers,* Vol. I, p. 549.

In seeking to understand the social conditions responsible for the half-hearted sanction accorded by Christian leaders to marriage, the moral decadence of Roman society must not be overlooked. Although our own age tends to adopt a somewhat Pharisaical attitude toward sexual immorality in Imperial Rome, enough trustworthy contemporary evidence exists to show that it was brazen and flagrant. Gormandizing and attendance at the brutal games of the circus but served to intensify sexual desires, already overstimulated, and led to a laxity in the relations of men and women that more than once expressed itself in disgusting sexual orgies.[6] Under such circumstances the fear and aversion so often voiced by the Christian Fathers for all gratification of natural impulses can be better understood. An age of unrestrained license in the indulgence of bodily appetites is not infrequently followed by a period of ascetic repression of even the most innocent desires.

Holding such views with regard to marriage, it was natural enough that the Church should condemn second marriages as little better than bigamy. Tertullian refers to such unions as "detrimental to faith" and "obstructive to holiness" and declares that St. Paul would not suffer a man twice married to preside over a church or a widow to enter the order of widows unless she were "the wife of one man." "For it behooves God's altar to be set forth pure."

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[4] I *Cor.* 7: 1–17, 36–40.

[5] *History of Matrimonial Institutions* (University of Chicago Press, 1904), Vol. I, p. 331. By permission. Italics mine.

[6] See Sienkiewicz, *Quo Vadis,* pp. 255–256.

Likewise the Church early expressed its disapproval of a married clergy. No doubt the advice to bishops and priests not to marry was at first merely a counsel of perfection. But it is certain that the later Apostolical Canons restricted liberty of marriage after ordination to readers and singers in the lowest orders of the clergy. In 314 A. D. the Council of Ancyra permitted deacons to marry only if they had given notice of their intention to do so at the time of their ordination. Still later, in 402, a church council under Pope Innocent I ordered bishops, priests, and deacons to remain unmarried.[7]

A fair-minded study of the writings of the later Church Fathers forces the conclusion that these Christian leaders with few exceptions totally failed to grasp the spiritual nature of marriage—the joys of comradeship, of mutual love and sympathy and understanding that are the most precious accompaniments of true wedlock. In their reaction against the gross licentiousness of Roman society, they tended to regard marriage as a legalized satisfaction of fleshly desire and were blind to precisely those spiritual values in the relationship of which they might reasonably have been expected to be most appreciative. This remains true even though marriage quite early came to be looked upon as a sacrament, probably owing to St. Paul's mystical comparison of the relation of husband and wife to that of Christ and his church.

ATTITUDE OF THE CHURCH TOWARD BETROTHAL AND MARRIAGE CUSTOMS

It should be remembered that for more than three centuries Christianity was seeking to establish itself in the midst of a pagan society whose marriage customs were already firmly fixed. Therefore the leaders of the Church were early confronted with the problem of acceptance or rejection of the Roman practices with regard to betrothal and nuptials. Very wisely they decided at first to accept these customs as they stood, forbidding only such sacrificial rites and prayers to the gods as were clearly opposed to Christianity. No doubt the family ceremonies connected with betrothal, marriage, naming of children, and assuming the toga of manhood had far more sanctity and were more deeply enshrined in the hearts of the Roman people than the public worship of the national deities. Thus it came about that Christianity found the pagan world "more ready to give up Jupiter and Mars than the Lares and Penates." In an indulgent spirit much to its credit, the early Church permitted Christians to attend the family festivals of their non-Christian friends even when pagan sacrifices were performed. It was not until 392 A. D. that the Christian Emperor Theodosius issued an edict forbidding all pagan rites in family ceremonials.

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[7] Article by Meyrick on "Marriage" in *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities,* Vol. II, p. 1098.

Betrothal.

It will be remembered that the Romans had regarded betrothal as a contract which might be broken without legal consequences. Therefore pagan Rome was spared the undignified suits for breach of promise that clog our modern courts. At first, Christianity accepted the Roman view of betrothal as a private contract voidable by either party. But in the later centuries of the Empire, when Rome came more and more into contact with the Goths, Lombards, and Teutons to the North, barbarian ideas and customs regarding betrothal influenced Roman usage. Little by little the betrothal contract took on legal value, as was the universal practice among Teutonic tribes, until, in the time of Constantine, the formal exchange of a kiss gave to betrothal the character of a legal contract whose abrogation involved penalties.

So far did the Christian Church proceed in the direction of regarding betrothal as a binding contract, only a little less sacred than marriage, that, at the Council of Constantinople in Trullo, which sat in 680–681, it was decreed that marriage with a betrothed woman in the lifetime of her first betrothed constituted adultery.[8]

Since the Church Fathers made no attempt to interfere with old-established rites of betrothal and marriage, except when they were clearly idolatrous, the betrothal ceremony remained a private family festival. The parties gave their consent before witnesses to be married at some future time, and the parents signed an agreement with respect to the amount of the girl's dowry and the suitor's provision for his future wife. Then the betrothed couple clasped hands or exchanged a kiss as a symbol of formal ratification of the contract. Owing to barbarian influence, the custom grew up of giving to the girl's father a small amount of money (*arrha*) as a guarantee that the man would live up to the terms of the contract. Out of this sprang the practice, firmly established before the ninth century, of bestowing upon the girl a betrothal ring, which was always placed upon the third finger of the left hand, because of the romantic belief that a tiny vein connected this finger directly with the heart! In Tertullian's time (about 200 A. D.), it was customary for girls in Christian families to be veiled at betrothal, but this practice was later restricted to the nuptial ceremony.

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[8] See J. M. Ludlow on "Betrothal" in Smith and Cheetham, *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities,* Vol. I, p. 204.

Marriage.

Although the early Church sanctioned the existing Roman rites of marriage, it very early urged couples to secure the blessing of the priest upon their union. In a letter written in the first Christian century, Ignatius declares that "it becomes both men and women to form their union with the approval of the bishop that their marriage may be according to the Lord and not after their own lust." But although many good Christians did seek the priestly benediction upon their marriage, yet *such blessing was not essential to a valid marriage for many centuries*. Indeed there is a total absence of any marriage ritual in Christian manuals at least up to the seventh century. By that time it cannot be doubted that the Church was enforcing the priestly benediction as a fixed rule. Fortunately an early example of one of these marriage benedictions has been preserved to us. It runs in part as follows: "May she be a faithful and chaste Wife in Christ and may she continue a follower of holy women. . . . May she strengthen her weakness by the help of discipline! May she be modest, grave, bashful, and instructed in God by learning. May she be fruitful in child-bearing. May she be approved and innocent, and may she attain to the rest of the blessed and to the heavenly kingdom." [9]

In this ancient blessing is embodied the ideal of the married woman that had already crystallized in Christian communities. She must be a paragon of the gentler virtues and fully alive to the essential frailty of her nature as a woman. As the weaker vessel, she must bow at all times to her husband's will. Moreover she must meekly accept her duty, as a daughter of sinful Eve, to be "fruitful in child-bearing."

[9] Article on "Marriage" in *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*, Vol. II, p. 1108.

The practice of veiling the bride at marriage was not uncommon in Tertullian's day, and in the fourth century it was probably a general custom. Even then it was not obligatory, for St. Ambrose declares that "marriage itself *should be* sanctified by the priestly veil and by benediction. . . ." [10] By the ninth century, however, the Church had certainly developed a marriage ritual binding upon all true believers. As evidence, Professor Howard quotes from a letter written about 860 A. D. by Pope Nicholas to the recently converted Bulgarians who had sought his counsel with respect to the rites proper to Christian matrimony: "First of all they [the bridal couple] are placed in the church with oblations, which they have to make to God by the hands of the priest and so at last they receive the benediction and heavenly veil." [11] In the Eastern half of the Roman Empire, the practice of crowning the bride and groom with myrtle or olive leaves took the place of the veiling ceremony of the West.

MARRIAGE PROHIBITIONS

Very early the Christian Fathers began that policy of placing various prohibitions upon marriage between certain individuals which was later to result in hopeless confusion. So-called "mixed marriages," i.e., marriages between Christians and Jews, heretics or the unbaptized, were frowned upon from the first. In the Theodosian code of the fourth century it was enacted that marriage with a Jew was a capital crime, and later councils expanded this prohibition to include heretics and unbaptized persons. The law was enforced with great difficulty because it was not in harmony with public opinion. The general disregard in which it was held is shown by the fact that St. Jerome sharply reproves the women of his day because "the greater part, despising the apostle's command, marry heathens." [12] Some years later, St. Augustine says that mixed marriages were not held as a sin in his day nor should they preclude baptism of the parties.

Christian prohibitions upon marriage did not end here. The Church recognized three kinds of relationship which constituted impassable barriers to marriage. These were (1) consanguinity or kinship by blood, (2) affinity, (3) spiritual affinity. The second term refers to the doctrine

[10] Italics mine.

[11] Howard, *op. cit.*, p. 295, footnote 6.

[12] See letter *Against Jovinian* in *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers,* Vol. VI.

of the church that the relatives of both husband and wife were mystically akin, since marriage made of the man and woman "one flesh." This assumed relationship barred men and women related to either husband or wife within the seventh degree from intermarriage. Matters were further complicated by the theory of "spiritual affinity," i.e., the doctrine that all persons who had participated in the religious rites of baptism or confirmation were made spiritually akin thereby and could not intermarry. It can readily be seen how difficult it might be for any man or woman contemplating marriage to determine whether the other party were related within the forbidden degrees. So inextricable became the tangle that in 802 A. D. the Emperor Charlemagne enacted that no person could enter into matrimony until "the bishops, priests and elders of the people" had made diligent inquiry into the relationship of the parties. The records show that numerous mistakes were made, honestly and otherwise, which sometimes served as grounds for the annulment of an irksome marriage during the Middle Ages.

BENEFICIAL EFFECTS OF CHRISTIANITY UPON MARRIAGE AND FAMILY RELATIONS

From the beginning of its history Christianity set its face sternly against the low ideals and the gross abuses that were undermining family life in Rome. But at first its influence was confined to the relatively small body of believers that constituted the Christian Church. As time passed on, however, increasing numbers of cultivated pagans became attracted to the new religion. From the fourth century on, Christianity exerted a wide influence in educating the moral sense of Rome to regard abortions, infanticide, child exposure, and divorce as grave social evils. With earnest conviction the Church Fathers branded infanticide and abortion as murder and punished the guilty parents with exclusion from the sacraments of the Church until the hour of death. Likewise severe penance was exacted of those who exposed their children either to death or, in case of rescue, to the terrible fate of the slave or the prostitute. Yet these practices were so deeply woven into the life of the Roman people that Christianity found them very difficult to eradicate. Centuries passed before infanticide and abortion had been stamped out in Christian Rome; and as late as the sixth century we find Justinian legislating against child exposure.

With respect to divorce the doctrine of the Church seems not to have been clearly defined for several centuries. The fact that Christ is declared to have recognized no cause for dissolution of marriage in *Mark* (10: 11, 12), while in *Matthew* (19: 9) he is said to have sanctioned divorce for the one cause of fornication, resulted in a division of opinion among the early Church Fathers on this point.[13] But, as the theory of the Church that marriage is a sacrament crystallized into a hard and fast dogma, the Christian leaders became more and more unwilling to sanction divorce for any cause whatever. It was this position that finally won acceptance and came to prevail throughout the Middle Ages down to the present time. Whether this unbending attitude toward the matter of divorce has been an unmixed benefit to the family may well be questioned. Nevertheless, in an age when marriage was entered into with complete irresponsibility and as lightly terminated at the whim of either or both parties, the teaching of the Church that wedlock is a sacred, indissoluble relationship, in which the man and woman "become one flesh," unquestionably stabilized the family during the unsettled centuries of the Middle Ages. However, the process of education of the popular mind to disapproval of divorce was a very slow one. Many centuries passed before the Church had achieved complete control over this field of social relations.

Of more unmixed benefit to the development of a sound philosophy of sex relations was the doctrine of the Church that impurity of life and unfaithfulness to the marriage vow is as sinful in men as in women. With intense conviction the Christian Fathers upheld the single standard of morals and condemned adultery, in husband as in wife, in unmeasured terms. Here, again, the Church found itself opposed to popular belief and custom. Consistent as was its own teaching, therefore, it would be idle to maintain that this view was ever generally accepted in Christian lands. From the time of the Church Fathers to the present the Christian doctrine of the equal obligation of purity upon the man and woman has been regarded as an ideal but unpractical theory, while popular custom has gone quite counter to its teaching. During the first three centuries, however, when the Christian community was relatively small and closely knit, the Church did impartially enforce its doctrine, visiting upon guilty husband and guilty wife alike the penalty of exclusion from the Church and its sacraments.

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[13] On this divergence of view see Ralph De Pomerai, *Marriage, Past, Present and Future; an Outline of the History and Development of Sexual Relationships* (Constable and Co., London, 1930), pp. 175–177.

UNFAVORABLE INFLUENCES EXERTED BY CHRISTIANITY

The influence of Christianity upon marriage and the family was not always beneficial. Reference has already been made to the theory of many of the Church Fathers that marriage represented the lowest of the three grades of purity. So deeply rooted was the idea of the essential uncleanness of the sexual act, even when it was an expression of love within a true marriage, that certain medieval manuals of instruction called *penitentials* contained clauses forbidding married couples to take part in the sacrament of the communion if they had cohabited on the preceding night. Thus the Penitential of Archbishop Theodore of Canterbury, written in the seventh century, contains the following rule: *Qui in matrimonio sunt, III noctes abstineant se conjunctione antequam communicant.* ("Those who are joined together in matrimony should abstain from cohabitation three nights before receiving communion.") [14] It may readily be understood how such teachings, together with efforts to enforce them, would cast discredit upon the marriage relation as not far removed from fornication. Likewise in its exaltation of virginity the Church tended to encourage continence after marriage. There can be no doubt that, during the early centuries of asceticism, a considerable number of husbands and wives made the resolve to abstain from sexual intercourse. In those cases where only one partner took the vow, there must have resulted a permanent embitterment that reacted disastrously upon the happiness of married life. On this point Lecky writes: "Whenever any strong religious fervour fell upon a husband or a wife its first effect was to make a happy union impossible. The more religious partner immediately desired to live a life of solitary asceticism, or at least, if no ostensible separation took place, an unnatural life of separation in marriage. . . . The extreme disorders which such teaching produced in domestic life . . . naturally alarmed the more judicious leaders of the Church and it was ordained that married persons should not enter into an ascetic life except by mutual consent." [15]

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[14] Hadden and Stubbs, *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents Relating to Great Britain and Ireland* (Clarendon Press), p. 199. By permission of the Oxford University Press.

But the unfavorable reactions of Christianity upon marriage did not end here. Very early the Christian Fathers showed a disposition to thrust women back into a narrow home environment, subject them completely to the authority of their husbands and deny them the right to teach, to baptize, or to preach in the Church. Probably the influence of St. Paul was in no small measure responsible for the attitude of the Christian Fathers toward women. It was this early builder of the Church who had exhorted women to "keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law" (I *Cor.* 14: 34). Again St. Paul reflects the Hebrew view of women, in which he had been brought up, when he declares that woman should cover her head or be shorn. "For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman but the woman for the man" (I *Cor.* 11: 7–9). These teachings were reinforced by the prevailing tendency to regard woman as the cause of the fall of Adam and responsible for the appearance of sin in the world. Tertullian is especially ruthless in his denunciation of women on this ground. "And do you not know," he exhorts them in his letter *On Female Dress*, "that you are (each) an Eve? The sentence of God on this sex of yours lives in this age: the guilt must of necessity live too." No doubt a further cause of the strict subordination of women, after the first century of Christianity, may be found in the ascetic movement itself, which, prohibiting as it did even a temperate gratification of natural desires, looked askance at woman as the temptress of men to carnal acts. The writings of the Church Fathers are deeply colored by this view. It would almost seem as if the preachers of asceticism were unable to regard women in any other light than as an incitement to sexual indulgence. Therefore their teachings reveal a prurience that is more than a little distasteful to present-day readers. In consequence of the widespread acceptance of these views by the fourth Christian century, woman's place was very clearly marked off for her. She was to remain at home, serve her husband and children, be obedient and subservient to her lord, and meekly accept the teachings of the Church authorities. To be sure, widows had early been employed in Christian communities to visit the sick, assist the poor, and care for friendless orphans. With the advance of asceticism, however, the widow gave place to the virgin, a superior type of purity in the eyes of the Church Fathers. These single women formed the order of deaconesses that has survived to modern times. None of these women, however, was given any authority within the Church to teach, preach, or baptize.

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[15] *History of European Morals from Augustus to Charlemagne* (D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1903), Vol. II, pp. 322–324.

In an influential work called the *Apostolical Constitutions,* written in the fourth century, woman's position and functions are made plain: "Let the wife be obedient to her own proper husband, because 'the husband is the head of the wife' . . . Therefore, O wife, next after the Almighty . . . and after His beloved Son, . . . do thou fear thy husband and reverence him, pleasing him alone, rendering thyself acceptable to him in the several affairs of life, that so on thy account thy husband may be called blessed, . . . Look downward when thou walkest abroad, veiling thyself as becomes women." And again: "We do not permit our women to teach in the churches, but only to pray and hear those that teach; for our Master and Lord, Jesus Himself, when He sent us the twelve to make disciples of the people and of the nations, did nowhere send out women to preach, although He did not want [lack] such. . . . For 'if the head of the wife be the man,' it is not reasonable that the rest of the body should govern the head." [16]

The *Clementine Homilies,* written in the third century, strike a similar note in regard to a woman's proper attitude toward her husband: "The chaste woman loves her husband from the heart, embraces, soothes, and pleases him, *acts the slave to him,* and is obedient to him in all things except when she would be disobedient to God." [17]

It is a far cry from the freedom enjoyed by the matrons of Rome under the late pagan régime to this almost Oriental subjection of women taught by the early Christian Church. The doctrine of woman's inferiority is reflected in the canon laws with respect to married women's property. Instead of allying itself with Roman law and custom, which gave comparative freedom to married women in the enjoyment of their personal property, other than the dowry, and debarred husbands from the management of it, Christianity lent its powerful influence to perpetuate the practices of the barbarian tribes, who debarred women in most instances from the ownership of land and gave over the administration of all their property into the hands of their husbands. Sir Henry Maine points out that the more liberal attitude of Roman law has prevailed in Christian lands *only so far as the single woman is concerned.* Unmarried women "were relieved from the bondage of the family" and permitted to hold and administer property. But the medieval laws relating to married women should be read in the light not of Roman but of canon law, "which in no particular departs so widely from the spirit of secular jurisprudence as in the view it takes of the relations created by marriage." He adds that the expositors of canon law, by keeping alive the property disabilities of married women, "have deeply injured civilization."[18]

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[16] *Ante-Nicene Christian Library,* Vol. XVII, p. 25 and § VI.

[17] Italics mine.

THE INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY ON ROMAN LEGISLATION

It is probable that the Christian Church had little effect on Roman law until Christianity was recognized by Constantine and later elevated to the position of the state religion by Theodosius (d. 395). Previous to the fourth century, Stoic influence had been powerfully exerted in behalf of more humane legislation in Rome and a mitigation of the earlier harsh laws with respect to women and children. Indeed, so careful a writer as Muirhead holds that the Stoics did more to bring about a humane spirit in Roman legislation than Christianity itself.[19] The influence of the Church made itself felt at first in the laws forbidding marriage with Jews, apostates, and unbelievers. Christianity was also responsible for three changes in Roman legislation of considerable importance, viz., (1) the repeal of laws penalizing celibacy, (2) legislation regulating divorce, (3) enactments depriving the Roman patriarch of most of the powers and privileges he had enjoyed under the old legal code. With regard to the first point it may be said that the Church unquestionably brought about the repeal of those clauses of the *Lex Julia et Papia Poppæa* (see p. 46) which visited severe financial penalties on men and women who were unmarried or childless. In an age when asceticism was a growing influence in Western Europe, the Augustan laws making celibacy a social offense, punishable by loss of rights of inheritance, aroused strong disapproval among those Christian leaders who were upholding virginity as the highest type of life. This attitude finally led to their repeal by Constantine in 320 A. D. Quite early, also, Christian Emperors began to enact laws designed to regulate divorce by imposing financial penalties on the party responsible for dissolving a marriage on insufficient grounds, as well as on the guilty party in a divorce for recognized causes. But it is worthy of note that for two centuries none of the Christian Emperors after Constantine ever seriously attempted to interfere with divorce by mutual consent. So firmly was this custom established in Roman life and so generally accepted was the principle that divorce should be "as free as marriage and independent of the sanction or decree of a judicial tribunal" [20] that divorces by mutual consent were common up to the time of Justinian. The whirligig of time has again made of this question a live issue in the present day. Liberal men and women are maintaining, as no doubt they once argued in Rome, that the fact that *both* parties to a marriage desire its dissolution constitutes the most cogent reason for granting divorce. But the Emperor Justinian, influenced by Christian teaching, held an opposite belief. In one of his *Novels* he enacted that both parties to a divorce by mutual agreement should be required to enter a monastery. Otherwise the divorce should be null and void. However, this law was so opposed to popular opinion and custom that it was repealed by Justin the Second, his nephew and successor to the throne of the Eastern Empire.

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[18] *Ancient Law* (1894 ed.), pp. 157–158. By permission of Henry Holt and Company.

[19] *Historical Introduction to the Private Law of Rome* (A. & C. Black, Ltd., London, 1916), p. 355.

The third point in which the Church influenced Roman legislation was in assisting to undermine the ancient supports of the *patria potestas* and add to the property rights of the wife under specific conditions. From the time of Augustus Cæsar laws had been passed successively tending to weaken the vast powers of the Roman husband and father. Therefore in the Justinian code almost the last relics of the old idea of the family as a body of persons absolutely under the domination of its patriarch or head had disappeared. As we have seen, *manus,* or the power of the husband over the wife, had long since been abandoned and marriage rested solely upon the consent of the parties. Roman law granted equal rights of protection to both husband and wife. Moreover, since the woman at marriage no longer became a member of her husband's family, she lost all rights of inheritance to his property until the claims of remote relatives had been satisfied. Nor could the husband inherit from the wife. To the custom of granting a *dos* or dowry to the woman for her husband's use was later added the practice of setting aside a *donatio,* or marriage settlement for the wife, from her husband's property. In the Justinian code it was laid down that, whenever a dowry was furnished by the wife's family, a *donatio* must be provided by her husband; and if one were increased during the marriage a corresponding increase must be made in the other. Furthermore, if the husband were insolvent, the wife might legally demand the transfer to herself of both her dowry and marriage settlement, on condition that the property was spent in the support of the offspring of the marriage. Likewise, in case of her husband's death or her divorce on insufficient grounds, the woman might claim both the *dos* and the *donatio.*

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[20] See Muirhead, *op. cit.,* p. 356.

Perhaps the most telling blows leveled against patriarchal power consisted in the repeal of the age-old laws granting to fathers despotic powers over the persons and property of their children. Beginning with the act passed in the reign of Augustus Cæsar which permitted a son to own and dispose of any property acquired by him in the active performance of his duties as a soldier, a long series of enactments stripped from the father most of his ancient authority and privileges. In the words of Muirhead: "All that remained of the *patria potestas* in Justinian's legislation is what is sanctioned in modern systems: the right of moderate chastisement for offenses, testamentary nomination of guardians, giving of the son in adoption, and withholding consent to the marriage of a child. The latter was subject to magisterial intervention if unreasonable." [21]

How much credit should be given to Christianity for the overthrow of patriarchal power? An impartial study of the Roman domestic legislation from the age of Augustus to that of Justinian shows unmistakably that a gentler spirit and a higher regard for personal rights had developed in pagan society with the advance of civilization. For example, in the first century A. D., long before Christianity became influential, a Roman father who had scourged his son to death was with difficulty rescued by Imperial officers from an angry populace bent on tearing him to pieces. The most that can be conceded to Christian influence is that it carried forward to its completion a tendency, already well advanced, toward a steady amelioration of the harsh laws of an earlier and cruder civilization.

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[21] *Historical Introduction to the Private Law of Rome,* p. 387. By permission.

THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD

During the long centuries of the Middle Ages, the barbarian tribes of Western Europe—the Goths, the Vandals, the Teutons, the Franks, and the Saxons—were slowly learning the lessons of civilization. It required nearly a thousand years of social experience to transform these warlike, undeveloped peoples into societies with a regard for law and order, for religion and learning. Under the rude conditions of life throughout most of this period, when war was glorified and brute force exalted above the humane social virtues, the family maintained itself in its patriarchal and autocratic form. Not only children but women were strictly subordinated to the will of the father and husband. The Christian Church strove to mitigate patriarchal power but never to undermine it. Feudalism, which was firmly established from the eleventh to the fifteenth century, denied to women the right to own land (unless there was no male heir) and did little to raise their status. During these centuries the Church established complete control over marriage and divorce, which, at the beginning of the Middle Ages, had been regarded as private matters in the hands of the male head of the family.

TOPICS FOR REPORTS

1. Two Views of the Influence of Early Christianity on the Roman Family.
   - C. F. Thwing, *The Family* (Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Co., Boston, 1913), Ch. III.
   - W. Goodsell, *A History of Marriage and the Family* (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1934), Ch. V.
2. Asceticism in Its Effects upon Marriage and the Family.
   - W. E. H. Lecky, *History of European Morals from Augustus to Charlemagne* (D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1903), Vol. II, pp. 317–340.
   - G. E. Howard, *A History of Matrimonial Institutions* (The University of Chicago Press, 1904), Vol. I, pp. 324–332.
3. Family Legislation in Rome as Influenced by Christianity.
   - James Muirhead, *Historical Introduction to the Private Law of Rome* (A. & C. Black, London, 1916), pp. 345–426.

4. Divorce in the First Christian Centuries.
   G. E. Howard, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 11–33.
5. Influence of Christianity on the Position and Social Influence of Roman Women.
   J. Donaldson, *Woman: Her Position and Influence in Ancient Greece and Rome and among the Early Christians*, pp. 148–191.

ADDITIONAL SELECTED READINGS

1. Hastings, James, ed., *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1908–1927), Vol. V, pp. 746–749.
2. Howard, Geo. E., *History of Matrimonial Institutions* (University of Chicago Press, 1904), Vol. I, pp. 291–292, 324–332.
3. Lecky, W. E. H., *History of European Morals* (D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1900), Vol. II, pp. 20–34, 316–327, 336–347, 350–358.
4. Schaff, Philip, ed., *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1890–1908).
   St. Jerome, *Letters*, Vol. VI. See Letters to Laeta (No. CVII), to Eustochium (No. XXII), to Pammachius (No. XLVIII), to Amandus (No. LV).
5. Schmidt, Carl, *Social Results of Early Christianity* (Guilbert Pitman, London, 1907), Bk. II, Ch. III.
6. Smith, Wm., and Cheetham, S., eds., *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities* (Little, Brown and Company, Boston, 1875–1880).
   Meyrick, article on "Marriage," Vol. II. Ludlow, articles on "Betrothal," Vol. I, p. 203, and "Benediction," Vol. I, p. 193.

CHAPTER IV

THE RENAISSANCE AND THE FAMILY

INTELLECTUAL AND SOCIAL PROGRESS OF WOMEN

THE Renaissance was a period of great intellectual energy, when men's minds were breaking loose from the bonds of dogmatic authority that had so long held them prisoners and were escaping into the free air of inquiry, speculation, and enjoyment of life in this world. The classics of Greece and Rome opened to the eager minds of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries a new world of human interest, human aspiration, human endeavor and achievement. During this period of enlightenment, the privileged classes in Italy and France led lives of greater personal freedom of thought and action than had been known in the West since the decay of the Roman Empire.

Such an era of emancipation from customary molds of thinking and acting was bound, in time, to affect the lives of women, and such, indeed, was the case. Yet these beneficent influences, broadening as they did the social and intellectual experiences of women, were restricted in two ways. First, they had little or no effect upon the women of the middle and laboring classes, being limited to women of noble birth. Secondly, the liberation of the patrician woman was only partial, showing itself mainly in an improvement of her education and an enlargement of her opportunities for social intercourse.

In Italy first, and a century later in France and England, there developed, alike in the palaces of royalty and the merchant princes and in the castles of wealthy nobles, a courtly social life characterized by literary culture and much keen wit and repartee. To this brilliant company nobly born women were admitted and contributed their share to the interest and sparkle of the conversation. From a delightful work called *The Courtier,* written by Castiglione in 1528, we may form a true and vivid picture of the larger educational and social advantages accorded to women in the princely circles of Italy. Castiglione does not hesitate to aver that all "the things that men can understand, the same can women understand too. . . ." Therefore a lady's knowledge should include "Letters [i.e., a wide range of literature], music, painting, and how to dance and make merry." [1] Not a very comprehensive or thorough education, you may say, but it was probably much the same as that laid down for the brothers and husbands of these court ladies. Many Italian noblewomen became well grounded in ancient literature at this time; witness Cecilia Gonzaga, daughter of the Duke of Mantua; Vittoria Colonna, friend of Michelangelo; and the sisters Ginevra and Isotta d' Nogaroli, who were so thoroughly schooled in the humanities that they composed speeches and poems and were thought worthy to correspond with Guarino, most famous of the humanists of Verona.

Nor was a classical education accorded only to Italian women. History tells us of the learning of Queen Isabella of Spain, who became proficient in Latin and founded a library of priceless manuscripts at Toledo; and of her daughter Katherine of Aragon, later the unfortunate wife of Henry VIII of England, who was characterized by Erasmus as "a Miracle of her sex nor is she less to be reverenced for her piety than for her erudition." In France, too, appeared the learned woman. Margaret of France, sister of Francis I, was one of the leading intellectual spirits of her day; and her *Heptameron,* written in imitation of the widely read *Decameron* of Boccaccio, sheds a broad gleam of light on courtly ideals and manners in the France of the sixteenth century. In England, likewise, noble ladies were liberally educated. We read of the thorough classical education given to the Princesses Mary and Elizabeth and of the remarkable erudition of the Lady Jane Grey, who was said to have thoroughly mastered Greek, Latin, French, and Italian at sixteen and to have had some knowledge of Hebrew, Arabic, and Chaldee.

Not only were the minds of court ladies broadened and developed, but their social life seems to have been much freer than in previous centuries. Castiglione paints with glowing colors the stimulating court life at the castle of the Duke of Urbino, where lords and ladies carried on lengthy discussions of such moot and modern questions as the double standard of morals, the relations of husbands and wives, the superior chastity of women, and the effect of love in making men more gentle and humane. An enthusiastic advocate of women's virtues and rights was Castiglione. Into the mouth of his spokesman, The Magnifico, he puts an ardent defense of women, relates tales of their loyalty and devotion to worthless or cruel husbands, and even upholds the theory, unheard of in those days, that love should quite properly precede marriage. "If my Court Lady be unmarried and must love," he writes, "I wish her to love some one whom she can marry; nor shall I account it an errour if she shows him some sign of love. . . ."[2] An advanced view, truly, in an age when marriage was largely an economic bargain arranged by parents!

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[1] *The Courtier* (ed. 1901, from the first edition, 1528), pp. 180–185.

PROPERTY AND LEGAL RIGHTS OF WIVES

But if the education and social life of noblewomen showed marked improvement during the Renaissance, the same cannot be said of their economic status and legal rights. In theory and in fact women were economic dependents, incapable of owning land and obliged to surrender all management of real and personal property, of which they had only the life use, into the hands of their husbands, who enjoyed the income therefrom. At the death of his wife, to be sure, the husband must surrender to her male heirs-at-law any lands of which she might have been possessed for life. But, in England at least, if a man's wife had borne him living issue he enjoyed at her death the ancient right of "curtesy," i.e., the life use of all his deceased wife's real estate. Only after his death did the land revert to her legal heirs. In England also, where the laws respecting married women's property retained all the harshness of the medieval code, a woman's personal possessions, consisting of money, furniture, house linens and the like, became the *absolute* property of her husband. Only her bed, clothing, and jewels[3] might be restored to a widow *if her husband had not sold them before his death.*

On the other hand, both France and England held to the medieval custom of granting a widow "dower," consisting usually of one third of the deceased husband's real and personal property. This custom had never become established in Italy, where the dowry had always assumed enormous importance. No Italian girl could hope to marry without this nest-egg; and ofttimes not only the immediate family, but relatives as well, struggled to assemble the necessary sum to secure a good match for the girl. The dowry was formally delivered to the husband immediately after the marriage and was his to enjoy for life. But, un-

[2] *Op. cit.,* p. 225.

[3] Called "paraphernalia."

like the practice in England, he was held legally responsible to return the entire property to his wife at his death to be used for the benefit of the children. Moreover, if he mismanaged or squandered the dowry, he might be sued at law and compelled to make restitution.

No better off were married women with respect to rights of contract, suit, and pleading of their own cases in the courts. At this time and for several centuries thereafter a woman at marriage lost her legal personality, which was merged in that of her husband. The current legal saying was: "Husband and wife are one and the husband is the one." This meant that all legal action to secure his wife's rights and defend her interests was vested in the husband, who made contracts and sales, brought suit, and pleaded before the law as the only person recognized by the courts in such action. These customs, of course, had their roots in the Middle Ages and, although thoroughly medieval in spirit, persisted for centuries after the Renaissance.

BETROTHAL AND MARRIAGE CUSTOMS

Owing to the influence of the Teutonic tribes of Western Europe, the old Roman theory that a betrothal was not a legal contract, and therefore could be terminated without penalty, gave way in course of time to the barbarian view that betrothal was but little less sacred and binding than marriage itself. In consequence litigation was frequently employed during the Middle Ages to bring faithless suitors to book or to force parents to carry out their part of the betrothal contract. It is unfortunate that the Teutonic and not the Roman view of betrothal has been handed down to our present age, for it has led to numberless suits for breach of promise, often resulting in heavy financial damages assessed on the party who has changed his mind, and has not rarely opened the door to blackmail.

Very little progress in ideas and practices with respect to marriage is apparent during the Renaissance, although somewhat later Luther injected into the prevailing philosophy of marriage some novel theories which will be considered later. While the Church taught that marriage was a sacrament, men in general looked upon it as a convenient economic arrangement by means of which they could secure at once keepers of their homes and wives to bear them legitimate offspring. The woman, on the other hand, looked to marriage as the only means of obtaining a respected social position and a home of her own. All the arrangements leading to betrothal and marriage were in the hands of parents who looked shrewdly into the financial aspects of the contract and did not hesitate to haggle over details of the girl's dowry or of the "marriage settlement" made by the husband in favor of the wife. Since mates were not chosen because of congeniality and affection but on grounds of economic and social advantage, and since husband and wife knew little or nothing of each other before the marriage, it is not surprising that these unions were frequently unhappy. A spirit of stoic acceptance of an evil lot or of bitter cynicism on the part of the man and woman thus mismated often appears in the literature of this period. Castiglione puts into the mouth of my Lord Gaspar the statement that there are probably many husbands who "hourly wish for death" because of "the torment of their wives"; while there are few wives "in the world who in their secret hearts do not hate their husbands." [4] About the same time Margaret of France philosophically declares: "Marriage is not a perfect state; let us be satisfied with wisely accepting it for what it is, *a makeshift but reputable.*" [5]

Among persons of rank the question of betrothing their daughters and "marrying them off" at an early age seems to have been of commanding importance. Betrothals of little girls three or four years of age were not infrequent in Italy, although marriage did not take place until after puberty, in the years between fourteen and sixteen. In England, likewise, nobly born children were betrothed and even married not long after they had left the cradle. Furnivall's valuable book on *Child Marriages . . . in the Diocese of Chester* (1561-1566) is packed with evidence showing that marriages of children from four to nine years of age were far from uncommon. Fortunately for these boys and girls, thus united for life by their parents before they could understand what it all meant, they might, after reaching puberty, take their cases into the Bishop's court and refuse to consummate the marriage, if they had the courage to withstand their parents' will. One such case was that of Roland Dutton, married to Margaret Stanley when he was nine years old and she but five. As the time approached when the two would be called upon to live together as man and wife, this doughty youth steadily refused to consummate the union. Thereupon the case was carried to the ecclesiastical courts. Here the boy declared that "he would refuse to take the said Margaret to his wife; and that he would not consent to the said marriage which was solemnized in his minoritie. . . ." [6]

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[4] *Op. cit.*, p. 193.

[5] *Heptameron,* Tale 40. Italics mine. Quoted in de Maulde, *The Women of the Renaissance* (George Allen & Co., Ltd., London, 1911), p. 49.

The custom of child betrothal and marriage is as old as social history. Savages practised it and it was common among the ancient Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans, as well as in the Middle Ages. Doubtless it sprang from the desire of parents to see their children well settled in life, and, in the case of girls, safely removed from the dangers and temptations of a troubled world. Once the practice had become well established, especially among the nobility, it received all the powerful sanction of custom, and parents would then regard it as discreditable not to have married off a daughter before she was sixteen.

It must not be supposed that all marriages during this period were luckless and all husbands and wives chafing under the matrimonial yoke. Letters and diaries of Italian husbands and wives throw light on the real affection that sometimes existed between married pairs. One Italian gentleman, Messer Donati Velluti, writes: "Bice, my first wife, was the daughter of Messer Corvone de' Covoni, and I took her in January, 1340, the year that her father died. . . . She loved everybody and wished them well, and I can but extol her, for she loved me and was fain of me with all her heart." And the lady Dora del Bene writes to her absent husband that "we are all well, God be praised, but we should be still better could we be with you. Good-bye. Thy Dora commends her to thee with a thousand good wishes." [7] Written in similar affectionate vein are some of the Paston letters, the correspondence of a middle-class English family of the fifteenth century.[8]

HOUSEHOLD ARCHITECTURE AND FURNISHINGS

In its economic aspect, the Renaissance was a period of great expansion in commerce and industry which ushered in an era of prosperity. Wealth flowed into Italy first and later into more northern lands, as their trade and manufactures increased in amount and value. With the spread of prosperity there developed a leisure class eager to improve their lives alike intellectually and materially. Under the spur of desire for more beauty and comfort in their homes, the Italian princes built charming palaces to replace the gloomy castles of the Middle Ages, and furnished them with rich hangings of silk or cloth of gold, antique statues in bronze and marble, choice pictures, and a variety of musical instruments. Not content with these evidences of refined taste, many nobles made collections of valuable books, the imperishable works of Greek and Latin authors, with which they enriched their libraries and quite often their minds as well. By the end of the fifteenth century most of the Italian castles had been modernized or rebuilt. Writing of these great houses, Boulting says:

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[6] See Furnivall, *Child Marriages . . . in the Diocese of Chester,* Early English Text Society, Vol. CXVIII, pp. 42–51.

[7] Quoted in Wm. Boulting, *Woman in Italy* (Methuen & Co., London, 1910), pp. 97–98. By permission.

[8] *Paston Letters* (1422–1509), ed. by John Gairdner (Westminster, 1900). See especially Vol. I, Letter 36.

> Two noble staircases . . . would lead to spacious upper chambers, where a bride would find great chests of drawers set against the walls, and an armchair beside a great bed tricked out with new curtains and smothered with flowers in her honor; and here she would see that her wedding-chest, filled with her rich dresses, was properly placed. Still a citadel without, the home of the wealthy noble or merchant was becoming a palace of art within. Citizens felt proud of the gorgeous private houses that were arising in their midst. . . . Crowds of servants replaced the feudal retainers. Renée of Ferrara had, of her own separate household in 1529, four secretaries, a chief lady and seven maids of honor, an almoner, two choristers, six maids of the bedchamber, six equerries, doctors, and, altogether, about 200 attendants and servants. The greatest artists were employed in painting the walls in fresco, in designing furniture and in modeling pieces of plate. In the sixteenth century Michelangelo did not disdain to bestow his genius on a salt-cellar nor Raphael and his school on domestic pottery.[9]

To be sure, there is a darker side to this glowing picture. If the homes of the Renaissance nobles were gorgeous, they were still unsanitary and lacking in the common conveniences that we to-day regard as essential. Ceilings might boast priceless paintings, there might be an abundance of sculptures and tapestries, but mattresses were of straw covered with coarse cloth, combs and wash basins were far from sufficient for family needs and windows were closed with oiled linen, often torn and dirty and rarely renewed unless distinguished guests were expected!

Somewhat later, household architecture in France and England was similarly modernized and improved. Sixteenth century English nobles built lofty Gothic dining-rooms with carved wainscotings to replace the bare stone eating halls of the castles. Richly carved ceilings, solid oaken furniture, walls covered with family portraits or with carved armorial bearings became quite common in the great Tudor houses of the sixteenth century, which boasted also huge staffs of servants. Privacy, a matter of indifference during the Middle Ages, was beginning to be prized; and my lord and lady had each a lofty and comfortable bedchamber.

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[9] Boulting, *op. cit.*, pp. 130–131. By permission of Methuen & Co., London.

THEORIES OF THE PROTESTANT REFORMERS CONCERNING MARRIAGE

To the Protestant Revolt, and especially to Martin Luther, society is indebted for breaking down the taboo raised by the Catholic Church against the control of marriage by social agencies. Holding as it did in its own hands all authority over matrimony and divorce, the Church continued to teach that marriage is a sacrament and therefore subject to control only by the spiritual courts. Against this position Luther revolted, at first doubtfully, but with growing conviction. Yet Luther's statements are often ambiguous on this point, as Howard has pointed out. In certain writings he is clearly opposed to the theory of marriage as a sacrament, but in his *Bücher und Schriften* he nevertheless speaks of marriage as a "most spiritual status," "ordained and founded" by God. So holy a state does he regard it, indeed, that he finds it necessary to use the term *sacrament* in describing it in another writing. Yet in the "Preface" to his *Shorter Catechism* he distinctly states that "since weddings and matrimony are a temporal business, it becomes us clerks and servants of the church to order or rule nothing therein, but to leave to each city and state its own usages and customs in this regard." More than once he makes the same declaration, as in his *Tischreden,* where he says that marriage, being "a temporal and worldly thing, does not concern the church."[10]

Such theories, earnestly upheld by the protagonist of the Protestant Revolt, resulted in the conversion of most of the German leaders to his views, and the Protestant German states gradually assumed all authority over marriage. Nevertheless the celebration of public[11] marriages remained in the hands of the church for many years. Slowly, as the idea of marriage as a civil contract gained in popular acceptance, marriages were celebrated by public officials, as well as by the clergy, in Protestant Germany and Holland,[12] and civil marriage became a firmly rooted custom. Not so, however, in England, where, although the Catholic doctrine of the sacramental character of marriage was ostensibly disavowed in the sixteenth century, the English clergy showed a disposition to compromise with this time-honored dogma. Not one clergyman of the Anglican Church took a firm stand for civil marriage during this period; consequently the religious celebration continued for centuries, with little or no change in form, except during the period of the Commonwealth.

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[10] For a thorough discussion of Luther's position and of the ambiguity of his writings on this point see Howard, *History of Matrimonial Institutions,* Vol. I, pp. 386–390, from which authority the above quotations are derived.

Under the Protectorship of Cromwell a Civil Marriage Act was passed in 1653 prescribing an *obligatory* civil celebration before a justice of the peace. Banns were to be published for three Sundays in church or the marriage announcement posted for that time in the market-place. At the time of marriage, a certificate stating that the publication had been duly made was to be presented to the officiating magistrate, together with proof of parental consent if the couple were under twenty-one. The ceremony itself was very simple, consisting in a public expression of consent to take each other as husband and wife "in the presence of God the Searcher of all Hearts" and before the assembled witnesses. The justice then pronounced the couple to be man and wife. The use of the ring, saturated as it was with symbolism and prominent in the Catholic ceremony, was sternly prohibited by Puritan law. Quite as important as the institution of civil marriage itself was the provision in the act that all "matters and controversies touching contracts and marriages" were to be referred to the justice of the peace or to such officials as the "parliament shall hereafter appoint." It is noteworthy that no provision for trial of divorce cases was made during the Commonwealth, and there can be no doubt that the prejudice against divorce was still strong throughout England.[13]

For seven years Cromwell's Civil Marriage Act remained in force, and during this time a far more careful registration of marriages was made than had previously been known in England. Thus a sturdy blow was struck at the evil of clandestine marriages with which England was especially plagued. Unfortunately, after the Restoration the Act of Cromwell was superseded by the old laws in force before the Commonwealth. The spirit of the act, however, lived on in the provisions made by the Puritans of the New England colonies of Massachusetts Bay and Plymouth for a civil celebration of marriages.

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[11] As opposed to clandestine unions *per verba de præsenti,* i.e., in words of the present tense, which were still common.

[12] In 1580.

[13] Howard, *op. cit.,* Vol. I, pp. 408–435.

In two other respects Luther's teachings exercised a profound influence over Protestant conceptions of marriage, especially in German lands and in those countries most influenced by them. Although the great Reformer attempted to get away from the Scylla of the church distinction between spousals in words of the present or of the future tense, he ran against the Charybdis of a similar unfortunate distinction with regard to betrothals. That is, Luther taught that engagements to marry at some future time, when certain specified conditions were fulfilled, should be regarded as "conditional betrothals"; whereas all betrothals publicly made with parental consent, and in words of the present tense, were *valid marriages,* even though they should not be consummated until after nuptials. So binding were these contracts of future marriage (called "pre-contracts") that legal action could be taken to enforce them and severe penalties were laid upon the offender who broke them. In consequence, Luther gave the powerful sanction of his approval to actions for "breach of promise" which are still common at the present time in many Christian countries. Moreover, the tremendous importance attached by the Protestant reformers to public betrothal led many couples thus betrothed to regard themselves as being "as good as married" and to consummate their union before the nuptial ceremony had been performed. This situation was productive of many scandals, not alone in Germany but in the New England colonies, where Luther's views about "pre-contracts" were put into practice, sometimes with unfortunate consequences.

A third result accomplished by Luther was the breakdown in Protestant lands of the time-honored doctrine of the "celibacy of the clergy." The literature of Luther's time and, indeed, of the centuries immediately preceding, abounded in references to the loose lives of the priesthood. These ballads and tales show plainly that parishioners were well aware that many of their spiritual advisers were living almost openly with concubines. With his accustomed courageous honesty, Luther "proclaimed the natural and scriptural right of priests to marry" and led the way himself by taking to wife the escaped nun Katherine von Bora. Protestant Germany was won over to this doctrine with comparative ease, but in England it encountered much opposition. Although an act of Edward VI in 1548 expressly sanctioned clerical marriages, they did not meet with general acceptance until after the death of Elizabeth, when the law of Edward VI was restored.[14]

FAMILY EDUCATION AND DISCIPLINE

During the Renaissance-Reformation period, as well as in the century preceding, many books and treatises were written exhorting parents to be diligent in bringing up their children in the fear of the Lord, at the same time pointing out to children the path in which they should walk with all sobriety. In the fifteenth century there appeared in England Hugh Rhodes's *Book of Nurture* written for the edification of parents and children. In it we read:

> Ryse you earely in the morning,
>   For it hath propertyes three;
> Holynesse, health and happy welth,
>   As my Father taught mee.
>
> At syxe of the cloche, without delay,
>   Use commonly to ryse,
> And give God thanks for thy good rest
>   When thou openest thyn eyes.[15]

Family government was far stronger in the sixteenth century than it is in the twentieth; and religious education within the home was unquestionably more general than it is now. Well-brought-up children were trained not only to say their prayers on rising and "to make a cross with [their] thombe" on forehead, mouth, and breast, with the words, "In nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti, Amen," but to accompany their parents to morning mass before breakfast. Quite often chapels, to which the entire household repaired every morning, were built on to the castles of the nobility. So prevalent was the custom that we read of cities and towns where an early mass at four, five, or six o'clock was celebrated for the benefit of those laboring people whose occupation prevented their attendance at church at a later hour. This was known as the "Morrow Mass." After mass came the morning meal. At table "children were taught to bless themselves by the sign of the cross, and to follow the head of the family as he called down God's blessing upon what His providence had provided for them." In sober families, reading aloud at dinner or supper was sometimes resorted to in order to avoid gossip and "unprofitable talk." In a quaint book by Richard Whytford, called *Werke for Housholders,* parents are enjoined to teach their children the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ave Maria, and "above all thynges (to) take heed and care in what company your chylder ben nouryshed and brought up. For education and doctrine, that is to say, bringing up and learning, done make ye manners." [16]

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[14] Howard, *op. cit.,* I, pp. 394–399.

[15] Furnivall, ed., *The Babees Book* (Trubner, London, 1868; now published by the Oxford University Press), pp. 72–73.

These were the days of stern family government and discipline. Whytford suggests that a child should be taught to ask his parents to "amende [hym] with a scourging" if he had committed any "trespace." And parents in turn are urged to "fulfil and performe theyr petition and request, and thynk it not cruelly, but mercifully done." Apparently fathers and mothers had little need of these exhortations, for the literature of the period frequently refers to the severe punishment of children and to the awe in which they were trained to hold their parents. Morning and evening they were taught to ask the parental blessing and to kneel when receiving it. We are told that Sir Thomas More, when Lord High Chancellor of England, was wont to repair to the court where his father, Sir John More, was sitting as judge to receive his blessing before hearing cases argued in his own court. The *Paston Letters,* written in the fifteenth century, throw a revealing light on the family discipline of that day. In one letter we read that the daughter of Agnes Paston, who had dared to refuse to marry the elderly man selected by her mother, had "been beaten once in a week or twice, and sometimes twice a day, and her head broken in two or three places." [17] So deeply rooted was the conviction that *parents owned their children* and that parental authority must be maintained at any cost in the interests of family unity, that the state rarely if ever interfered to protect the rights of children. The invasion of the father's power by the super-authority of the state is a modern phenomenon.

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[16] Abbot Gasquet, *Christian Family Life in Pre-Reformation Days* (The Dolphin Press, Philadelphia), p. 17; *Educational Briefs,* No. 17, January, 1907. By permission.

[17] *Op. cit.,* Vol. I, p. 50. By permission of Constable & Co.

In Luther's *Longer Catechism,* in his *Tischreden,* and in other of his writings he has much to say of the importance of family government and education. Believing as he did that the basis of both Church and State is found in the family, he urges with his customary earnestness that the home is the place in which the education of children for the Kingdom of God and for good citizenship can best be carried on. Like most religious writers of the time, he makes much of the virtue of obedience to parents. Thus he writes: "From the Fourth Commandment it is obvious that God attaches great importance to obedience to parents. And where it is not found, there can be neither good morals nor good government. For where obedience is lacking in the family, no city or principality or kingdom can be well governed. Family government is the basis of all other government; and where the root is bad, the trunk and fruit cannot be good."

Children, he declares, should not only love their parents but *honor* them and show toward them "modesty, humility and deference as though to a majesty there hidden. . . ." On the other hand, parents are reminded that they are entrusted with authority by God, not to use it as they please, but to train their children for society and the Church. And for the manner in which they perform this duty they will be held to a strict account. With all his emphasis on parental authority and the reverence due to parents from their offspring, Luther does not advocate the harsh punishment of children and the frequent use of the rod so prevalent in his day. No doubt he remembered his own sufferings at the hands of a stern and autocratic father. So, while requiring the strictest obedience of children, he exhorts parents to temper their discipline with love and moderation, and even to enter joyfully into the wholesome pleasures of their boys and girls.

This brief discussion should make plain that the patriarchal family was still firmly established in Western Europe at the close of the sixteenth century. Not only children but wives were under strict family government, administered by the husband and father. Save by his advocacy of an education for girls to make them useful mothers, Luther did little or nothing to raise the status of women, within or without the family. Indeed, he declares that the "woman's will, as God says, shall be subject to the man, and he shall be her master; that is, the woman shall not live according to her free will . . . and must neither begin nor complete anything without the man; where he is there must she be, and bend before him as before her master, whom she shall fear, and to whom she shall be subject and obedient."[18] So long as these ideas persisted, the patriarchal family was bound to endure. It required a thoroughgoing revolution in both the economic and the political spheres to modify these ancient conceptions of the place of women and children within the family, and to grant to them certain inalienable rights *as individuals*.

TOPICS FOR REPORTS

1. Marriage and Married Life in Italy.
   R. de Maulde la Claviere, *The Women of the Renaissance* (George Allen & Co., Ltd., London, 1911), Book I, Chs. I, II.
2. Child Nurture and Education During the Renaissance.
   Ibid., Chs. III, IV.
3. Home Life and Child Care in Shakespeare's England.
   Shakespeare's England (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1916), Ch. XX.
4. Household Economy in Renaissance Times.
   Wm. Boulting, *Woman in Italy* (Methuen & Co., London).
   W. Goodsell, *A History of Marriage and the Family* (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1934), pp. 285–292.
5. The Protestant Theory of Marriage.
   G. E. Howard, *A History of Matrimonial Institutions* (The University of Chicago Press, 1904), Vol. I, Ch. IX.

ADDITIONAL SELECTED READINGS

1. Castiglione, B., *The Book of the Courtier* (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1901), pp. 171–194, 205–209, 218–227.
2. Cleveland, A. R., *Woman under the English Law* (Hurst and Blackett, London, 1896), pp. 169–236.
3. Davis, Wm. S., *Life in Elizabethan Days* (Harper & Brothers, New York, 1930), pp. 30–47, 91–103.
4. Harrison, Wm., "Description of England in Shakspere's Youth," in *Holinshed's Chronicles* (New Shakspere Society, 1877), Vol. I.
5. Hill, Georgiana, *Women in English Life* (R. Bentley and Son, London, 1896), Vol. I, Period II, pp. 113–144.

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[18] Quoted in Wolfe, *Readings in Social Problems* (Ginn & Company, Boston, 1916), p. 475.

6. Phillips, M., and Tomkinson, W. S., *English Women in Life and Letters* (Oxford University Press, London, 1927), pp. 31–40, 94–98.
7. Putnam, Emily, *The Lady* (G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1910), pp. 158–210.
8. Tickner, F. W., *Women in English Economic History* (E. P. Dutton and Company, Inc., New York; J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., London and Toronto; 1923), Part II, Chs. V–VII.

CHAPTER V

THE COLONIAL FAMILY IN AMERICA

THE EARLY SETTLERS

EARLY in the seventeenth century began that stream of emigration from England to the New World which resulted in the founding of thirteen colonies on the seaboard of America. In New England, family institutions had their source in the middle-class customs and traditions of the Puritans and Independents; while Southern family life on the plantations was patterned largely upon that of the English manor house. In all the early settlements, especially in the North, the pioneers endured cruel hardships while establishing their new homes in a virgin wilderness. The courage and endurance of the first settlers in Plymouth, Massachusetts Bay, New York, and Pennsylvania are beyond praise. Nor were these qualities confined to the men. Gently bred women worked shoulder to shoulder with fathers and husbands in building and furnishing cabin homes and securing a steady supply of food. We read, for example, of one Elizabeth Hard who came to the shores of the Delaware with her husband and promptly set to work with him to build a dwelling house. "My good aunt," says Deborah Morris, in her narrative of her relative's experiences, "thought it expedient to help her husband at the end of the saw, and to fetch all such water to make such kind of mortar as they then had to build their chimney." Women, in the face of danger from the Indians, learned to mold bullets and load muskets; and some, at least, of these frontierswomen became excellent shots. Occasionally single women came to the New World alone to open up tracts of land. Among the first settlers of Taunton, Massachusetts, was an "antient maid" of forty-eight named Elizabeth Poole; and the town of Haddonfield, New Jersey, was named for a nineteen-year-old girl, Elizabeth Haddon, who made the long journey overseas to settle a large tract of land secured by her father.[1]

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[1] See J. A. Bruce, *Woman in the Making of America,* Ch. I.

POSITION OF WOMEN IN THE COLONIES

When our Colonial forefathers emigrated from the mother-country, they brought with them not only a store of precious household goods but also most of the traditional ideas about woman and woman's sphere that custom had made familiar in England. It is not surprising, then, to read that Colonial women were expected meekly to obey their husbands, to occupy themselves in household duties, to bear and rear enormous families, and not to hanker after intellectual education. In Governor Winthrop's *Journal* he states his belief that the wife of the Governor of Hartford colony had lost her mind "by occasion of giving herself wholly to reading and writing." Had she not "gone out of her way and calling to meddle in such things as are proper for men, whose minds are stronger, etc., she had kept her wits, and might have improved them usefully and honorably in the place God had set her." [2] No wonder that Anne Bradstreet, who, in the intervals of bringing up eight children and faithfully performing her domestic tasks, essayed to write verse, declares in one of these poetic ventures:

> I am obnoxious to each carping tongue,
> Who says my hand a needle better fits,
> A poet's pen all scorn I should thus wrong,
> For such despite they cast on female wits . . .[3]

The seventeenth-century English conception of the ideal woman was pretty faithfully reproduced in the New World. Witness this description by a Colonial writer of one Mrs. R—. She had, he says, "a round and pretty face, with gentle manners; kept her house well, her only pride to be neat and orderly. . . . The hyacinth follows not the sun more willingly than she her husband's pleasure." As in England, so in the Colonies, a woman of means surrendered at marriage all her property, both real and personal, into the management of her husband, who enjoyed the income thereof. If she bore her lord a living child he was further entitled to the life use of his wife's real estate after her death. This age-old privilege of English husbands still persists in some of the States of the Union. Furthermore, the husband had the *absolute ownership* of all his wife's personal belongings, including clothing, jewels, household furnishings brought at marriage, and money. Only if the husband had not disposed of them during his lifetime could his widow reclaim her paraphernalia, i.e., clothing and ornaments. If a married woman in Colonial days earned any money by her labor outside the home, she must turn every penny of it over to her husband, who was its rightful owner. Since she was not recognized in law as having any legal existence apart from her husband, who was her representative in the courts, the Colonial woman could neither sue nor be sued, nor could she make a contract or draw up a will without her husband's consent. It was this condition with respect to married women's legal and property disabilities that led an eighteenth-century author to declare that "she who, having laid a husband in the grave, enjoys an independent fortune, is almost the only woman among us who can be called free." [4]

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[2] Entry under date of 1645.

[3] Quoted in A. W. Calhoun, *A Social History of the American Family from Colonial Times to the Present* (Arthur H. Clark Co., Cleveland), Vol. I, p. 85.

But there is a reverse side of this picture that should not be ignored. In all the Colonies a man was held responsible for the support of his wife according to his means and station in life; and at his death, one third of his real and personal estate must revert to his widow for her life use. More than this, a husband was "liable to answer all such actions at law as were attached against his wife at the time of their marriage, and also to pay all the debts she had contracted previous to that period. . . ." This matter of a husband's liability for his wife's antenuptial debts led to the crude custom of so-called "smock marriages," practised by ignorant people who believed that if a woman came to her betrothed at marriage wearing only her smock he would be relieved of all responsibility for her debts.[5] In the New World, moreover, the husband's ancient privilege of wife-beating seems to have been frowned upon, at least in the New England Colonies. A law of the Massachusetts Bay Colony provided that "no man shall strike his wife, nor any woman her husband, on penalty of such fine, not exceeding £10 for one offence, or such corporall punishment as the county court shall determine." Likewise the Body of Liberties of Plymouth declared that "everie marryed woeman shall be free from bodily correction or stripes by her husband, unless it be in his own defence upon her assault."

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[4] See W. Alexander, *The History of Women* (London, 1782), Vol. II, pp. 505–513.

[5] See Goodsell, *A History of Marriage and the Family* (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1934), p. 361.

CHILDREN IN THE COLONIES

Large families were the rule in all the Colonies, since children, when well grown, could be of the utmost use in opening up waste land to cultivation and in resisting the attacks of Indian tribes, who resented the ever-widening encroachment of the white men on their lands. Women were expected to be fruitful, even to death, and were indeed, as Calhoun declares, "the vicarious sacrifice to the peopling of a continent." Sir William Phipps was one of twenty-six children, and Benjamin Franklin could boast of sixteen brothers and sisters. There is something pathetic in the thought of the little ones, born in the early years of the settlements into frontier life, the hardships of which even their parents found hard to endure.

As in England, so in the Colonies, children were expected to be seen and not heard, and to submit humbly to parental authority. The view of John Robinson, the Pilgrim preacher, that "there is in all children (though not alike) a stubbernes and stoutnes of mind arising from naturall pride which must in the first place be broken and beaten down . . ." was very generally shared by Colonial parents, and the birch rod was much in evidence in the home. Parental authority was firmly upheld in all the Colonies, but especially in New England. The harsh law of *Deuteronomy* decreeing death to the stubborn or gluttonous son was reproduced in Connecticut in the ordinance empowering parents to bring "a stubborn and rebellious son of sufficient years and understanding . . . to the magistrates assembled in court, and testify unto them that their son is stubborn and rebellious. . . ." Thereupon "such a son shall be put to death." Thus the patriarchal ideas of Hebrew times lived on under the altered conditions of the New World family. However, it is reassuring to learn that no record exists of the actual enforcement of this law. With so much evidence at hand to show that children were required to walk the strait and narrow path of humble obedience under fear of instant punishment, it is pleasant to read that Cotton Mather preferred to rule his children by begetting in them "a high opinion of their father's love to them, and of his being best able to judge what shall be good for them. . . . I would never come to give a child a blow; except in case of obstinacy or some gross enormity." [6]

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[6] *A Family Well-Ordered; or an Essay to Render Parents and Children Happy in One Another.* Quoted in Calhoun, *op. cit.,* Vol. I, p. 113.

MARRIAGE AND COURTSHIP IN THE COLONIES

The institution of marriage was highly regarded in all the Colonies, not only as a relationship blessed by God but as a means of peopling the vast expanse of the wilderness. It was natural enough that the handful of early pioneers, who were striving to transform forests into farmlands, to build permanent homes and establish settlements strong enough to beat off attacks by Indians, should regard it as a social obligation that every youth and maid should marry and rear a family. Everywhere celibacy met with social disapproval. Indeed, Colonial laws bore hard upon the bachelor. In some of the New England Colonies, for example Connecticut, "the selfish luxury of solitary living" was taxed twenty shillings a week; and a Massachusetts act of 1630 prohibited the employment of any person for less than a year unless he were a "settled housekeeper." Also in Pennsylvania, as late as 1766, it was not uncommon to impose double taxes upon bachelors.[7] But the disadvantages of celibacy did not stop here. Very generally the New England Colonies followed the example of Plymouth, which enacted that "henceforth noe single person be suffered to live by himselfe or in any family but such as the selectmen of the Towne shall approve of. . . ." A New Haven Colony law of similar tenor provided that "the governor" of any family publicly licensed to receive single persons of either sex, should "duly observe the course, carriage and behaviour, of every such person, whether he or she walk diligently in a constant lawful employment, attending both family duties, and the public worship of God, and keeping good order day and night, or otherwise." [8] Clearly, our sober Colonial forefathers by no means intended that any man or "antient maid" who shirked the social duty of marriage should taste the joys of a free and independent life.

Despite the fact that family government was firmly established in the Colonies, young people seem to have been allowed some freedom in the choice of a mate. In the delightful *Diary* of Judge Sewall we read that his daughter Betty refused several suitors, although her father once urged her to consider well before she dismissed a certain admirer of whom he approved. In New England, moreover, if parents unreasonably opposed a marriage, appeal could be made to the magistrate.

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[7] Howard, *A History of Matrimonial Institutions,* Vol. II, p. 170.

[8] Trumbull, *True Blue Laws,* p. 258.

Young people of opposite sexes were given more opportunity to mingle and to know each other in the new land than was the case in England. Even in Puritan New England we read that Boston early boasted "a small but pleasant common, where the gallants, a little before sunset, walk with their Marmalet-Madams till the nine o'clock bell rings them home to their respective habitations." And in South Carolina "at the end of the seventeenth century young girls received beaus at three o'clock expecting them to leave about six as many families retired at seven in winter and seldom sat up in summer beyond eight." [9]

In all the Colonies, courtship was not expected to drag on too long, and marriages at an early age were common. Madame Knight, in the racy account of her journey from Boston to New York in 1704, says of the young people of Connecticut: "They generally marry very young, the males oftener as I am told under twenty years than above." Early marriage was equally common in the Middle and Southern Colonies. A North Carolina physician, writing about 1731 of the custom in his Colony, says: "They marry generally very young, some at thirteen or fourteen, and she that continues unmarried until twenty, is reckoned a stale maid, which is a very indifferent character in this country." [10]

A sharp difference existed between New England and the Southern Colonies with respect to their conception of marriage. In Puritan Massachusetts, marriage was held to be a civil contract, as it was in Calvinist Holland and in England during Cromwell's régime. But in the South the planters held rigidly to the conception of the Anglican church that marriage was a religious union in the nature of a sacrament. Owing to its firm belief that matrimony was a civil and temporal affair, the Massachusetts Bay Colony insisted that the nuptial ceremony should be performed by a civil magistrate. Apparently the minister was not at first permitted even to preach a sermon on the happy occasion, for Governor Winthrop relates that one pastor who had been invited so to preach was forbidden by the magistrates on the ground that they "were not willing to bring in the English custom of ministers performing the solemnity of marriage which sermons at such times might induce." [11] However, Massachusetts abandoned this attitude in 1692, when fear of ecclesiastical control from England had died out. In the South, on the contrary, all marriages were celebrated by the clergy, save for a few exceptions in the Carolinas, until the period of the Revolution. The Middle Colonies seem to have vacillated in this regard, although they inclined rather more toward a religious than a civil celebration. However, East and West Jersey permitted marriages by "an approved minister or justice of the peace" up to the time when they were united with New York, late in the seventeenth century; and the "Duke's Laws" for New York, issued in 1664, provided that a justice of the peace might lawfully "join the parties in marriage."

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[9] Calhoun, *op. cit.,* Vol. I, p. 257.

[10] *Ibid.,* p. 245.

[11] Winthrop's *Journal* (New York, 1908), Vol. II, p. 330.

If the Colonies differed as to the nature of the marriage contract, they were unanimous in requiring that the marriage be duly published and registered. Publicity might be secured in three ways: (1) by reading the banns of marriage three times in some public place, preferably the church or meeting-house on Sundays; (2) by securing a license from the governor or the county court (in the South); (3) by posting a notice of intention to marry in some public place, as the court-house or meeting-house door. Banns or licenses seem to have been more popular in the Southern and Middle Colonies, whereas posting of a notice was very common in Pennsylvania and New England. The New Haven Colony required that this notice must remain in public view for 'the space of fourteen daies" and the other Colonies took similar action. Publication of banns was also a general practice in New England. Needless to say, such careful provisions for publicity stand in striking contrast to the present practice in most of these United States, where a young and thoughtless couple can secure a license and enter into the bonds of matrimony on one and the same day, leaving their friends and relatives none the wiser.

The Colonies further safeguarded marriage by requiring that the consent of the parents to the union be clearly expressed and that the marriage be duly recorded. Occasionally, in New England, a statement of parental consent to the future marriage was included in the banns. Registration of marriages was entrusted in New England to the town clerk, who was allowed a small fee for every person registered. Particularly stringent laws with respect to registration of marriages were enacted in Rhode Island, where a fine of five pounds was laid upon the bridegroom who failed to publish and register his marriage, as well as upon each of the offending accessories. In the South, the marriage register was kept by the clerk of the parish church, and such was the custom in the Middle Colonies.

COLONIAL DIVORCE LAWS

In the Southern and Middle Colonies, where the Church of England was firmly established, divorce was practically non-existent in Colonial times. The Anglican Church refused to grant divorces *a vinculo* for any cause whatever, and permitted separation from bed and board only for three serious causes, namely, adultery, desertion, and cruelty. Therefore no divorces were granted in the Southern Colonies during the entire period that they remained under English rule; and in only a few isolated cases were divorces granted in New York and Pennsylvania, by the governor and the Colonial legislature respectively. But if the doctrine of the Anglican Church respecting divorce was universally accepted in these Colonies, not so was the practice of establishing ecclesiastical courts to adjudicate in questions of marriage and separation. Apparently both the Southern and Middle Colonies were dubious concerning the value of these bishops' courts and fearful that they might gain an undue influence in the new country as in England. Therefore such courts were never established, even in Cavalier Virginia.

When we turn to New England we meet with a strikingly different situation. In these Colonies, as we have seen, the Catholic theory of marriage as a sacrament was positively rejected in favor of the doctrine of marriage as a civil contract. Holding this view, the New England Colonies generally did not hesitate to grant absolute divorce for such serious causes as adultery, desertion, cruelty, and refusal to provide. In the Massachusetts Bay Colony the authority to grant divorces was conferred first upon the Court of Assistants; but in 1692, by the *Acts and Resolves* it was transferred to the governor and council. In his valuable discussion of divorce in the New England Colonies, Howard [12] gives statistics to show that between 1639 and 1692 forty cases of divorce or annulment were brought before the Court of Assistants, in twenty-eight of which women were the plaintiffs. During the period 1739–1760 only three decrees of absolute divorce were issued, together with two decrees of separation. In the third period (1760–1786), ninety-six petitions were presented to the governor and council and seventy-six absolute divorces were granted. Thirty-seven of these were given to the husband on the ground of adultery on the part of the wife. It is interesting to note that the Puritans were not yet ready to accept the principle that adultery is equally culpable in the man and in the woman. A husband could always obtain a divorce from his wife on a proven charge of infidelity, whereas a wife could secure a dissolution decree only if her husband's unfaithfulness were accompanied by desertion, cruelty, or refusal to provide. During the later Colonial period the practice of granting separations from bed and board, without the right of remarriage, became more common.

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[12] Howard, *op. cit.,* Vol. II, pp. 330–366.

The Colony of Connecticut was unique in that the authority to grant divorces was lodged chiefly in the courts of law, although legislative divorce was also permitted here as in Rhode Island. Connecticut was further unique in treating husband and wife with even justice in all matters concerning divorce. With respect to the advanced practices in this colony, Howard says: "In short, Connecticut, in all the more essential respects, anticipated the present policy of civilized nations by nearly two hundred years." [13]

HOME LIFE AND EDUCATION IN THE COLONIES

After the first generations of settlers had overcome the most serious difficulties in providing food, clothing, and shelter for themselves and their families, the generations that followed found life a less strenuous and anxious affair. The well-to-do Southern families of the eighteenth century began to build those attractive plantation homes that always evoke memories of gracious and lavish hospitality. In the Middle Colonies, too, the Dutch, and later the English, built substantial and sometimes beautiful homes; while in New England the charming Colonial houses still standing in Concord, Salem, Litchfield, and other towns bear witness to the quiet good taste of their builders, as well as to their regard for solidity. No doubt it would try the soul of a modern woman to carry on the affairs of the household with such meager appliances as the Colonial housewife made shift with. Clocks and even chairs were rare in the seventeenth century, and, until tallow became plentiful, women were forced to make candles from bayberries. Not until the early eighteenth century did forks come into general use, and, since china was unknown, dishes were made of earthenware, of pewter, and even of wood. But if the Colonists had few forks, they had spoons in plenty, made of wood, pewter, or sometimes silver. Mrs. Earle tells us that worn-out "pewter plates and dishes could be recast into new pewter spoons." Tankards were likewise made of wood, pewter, and silver; and great jugs, called "black jacks," made of heavy black leather, waxed, bound and tipped with silver, were used to hold the ale and beer that our forefathers poured into these tankards for their refreshment.

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[13] *Ibid.,* pp. 353–354.

Children were strictly brought up in Colonial homes and their behavior was regulated by stringent rules that were sometimes printed in small books. One such book was called *A Pretty Little Pocket Book* and was published just before the Revolution. In this small manual of behavior children were enjoined never to sit down at the table until the blessing had been asked; never to speak unless spoken to, not even to ask for food; never to take salt except with a clean knife; and, above all, never to throw bones under the table! Religious training was held in high regard in Colonial homes. Family prayers were offered up daily in all well-managed households, and the Bible was placed in children's hands as soon as they could read. Servants were members of the family in those days. Not only were they present at family worship, but they were taught the catechism and questioned on the Sunday sermon no less than the children. But, with all this concern for the salvation of their souls, the old Adam peeped out in children and servants then as now. In 1657 a Puritan divine wrote to a brother minister: "Do your children and family grow more godly? Much ado I have with my own family; hard to get a servant that is glad of catechizing or family duties. . . . Even the children of the godly here, and elsewhere make a woful proof."[14]

Very early, children were trained to be of use to their parents; and this practical home education of boys and girls stood by them all their lives when they were called upon to be skilful in a score of ways. In the farm and garden, children weeded flax and even helped with the spring sowing. Girls were taught when quite young to help their mothers hetchel flax, comb wool, skein yarn, wind the warp on spools, and even spin. Mites of six could spin flax on the big spinning-wheel, even though

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[14] Alice M. Earle, *Child Life in Colonial Times* (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1899), p. 235.

"they had to stand on a foot-stool to reach up." Boys also had few spare moments for play out of school hours. A round of chores awaited them both before they went to school and as soon as they reached home. It was their part of the family tasks to bring in fuel, water the horses, cut potatoes for the sheep, milk the cows, feed the swine, pick the vegetables, and, in odd moments, weave tape and suspenders and spool yarn.[15] Life was strenuous, then as now, but in a different way; and although children received a very valuable education in coöperation and responsibility for maintaining the family comfort, there is no doubt that they lacked time for much-needed free play and were often overworked. In the eyes of the Puritan and the Quaker, idleness was the greatest of sins. Yet parents not rarely deplored the need that forced them to lay heavy tasks on their children's young shoulders. We read in Bradford's *History of Plymouth Plantation* (ed. 1908) that parents found that "necessitie was a taskmaster over them so they were forced to be such, not only to their servants, but in a sorte, to their dearest children; the which as it did not a litle wound the tender harts of many a loving father and mother, so it produced likwise sundrie sad and sorowful effects. For many of their children, that were of best dispositions and gracious inclinations haveing lernde to bear the yoake in their youth, and willing to bear parte of their parents burden, were, often times, so oppressed with their hevie labours, that though their minds were free and willing, yet their bodies bowed under the weight of the same and became decreped in their early youth; the vigor of nature being consumed in the very budd as it were."

If children were kept busy, even more so were their parents, who were striving, against serious obstacles, to maintain a home in a new and undeveloped country, where most family needs must be met by their own effort and skill. The father labored all day at heavy tasks of lumbering, farming, building, and manufacture of many of his tools and implements. As for the mother, the description given by Thomas Nelson Page of the duties of a Southern plantation lady, although written of a later period, pictures very vividly the housewife's multifarious labors, if we add to the list those of spinning, weaving, and making candles:

> She was the necessary and inevitable functionary, the keystone of the domestic economy, which bound all the rest of the structure and gave it

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[15] See Earle, *op. cit.*, pp. 305–313.

strength and beauty. From early morn to morn again the most important and delicate concerns of the plantation were her charge and care. . . . From superintending the setting of the turkeys to fighting a pestilence, there was nothing that was not her work. She was mistress, manager, doctor, nurse, counsellor, seamstress, teacher, housekeeper, slave, all at once. She was at the beck and call of everyone, especially of her husband, to whom she was "guide, philosopher and friend." [16]

This brief discussion may serve to show how firmly Colonial ideas respecting marriage and family life were rooted in English law and custom. Nevertheless certain practices, such as the legal protection of the wife from corporal chastisement at the hands of her husband, the freer association of girls and youth before marriage, the right of veto accorded young people with regard to the mates chosen for them by their parents, the custom of civil divorce in New England, all these were prophecies of a more equal association of the sexes and a freer family life in the United States than had been known in England for centuries.

TOPICS FOR REPORTS

1. Home Life in the Dutch Colony of New Netherland.
   Washington Irving, *Knickerbocker History of New York,* Book III, Chs. III, IV, VII.
2. Courtship, Marriage and Family Life in the Southern Colonies.
   A. W. Calhoun, *A Social History of the American Family from Colonial Times to the Present* (Arthur H. Clark Co., Cleveland, 1917), Vol. I, Chs. XII–XV.
3. The Position of Women in New England and in the South.
   Calhoun, *op. cit.,* Vol. I, Chs. V, XVI.
4. Divorce in the Colonies.
   G. E. Howard, *A History of Matrimonial Institutions,* Vol. II, Ch. XV.
5. Colonial Houses and House Furnishings.
   W. Goodsell, *A History of Marriage and the Family* (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1934), pp. 397–405.

ADDITIONAL SELECTED READINGS

1. Andrews, C. M., *Colonial Folkways* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1921), Vol. IX, Chs. III, VII.
2. Beverley, Robert, *The History of Virginia* (J. W. Randolph, Richmond,

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[16] *Social Life in Old Virginia* (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1912), pp. 37–38. By permission.

1855; reprinted from the second revised edition, London, 1722), pp. 54–58, 231–239, 262–264.

3. Bruce, Henry A., *Woman in the Making of America* (Little Brown and Company, Boston, 1912).
4. Calhoun, Arthur, *A Social History of the American Family* (Arthur H. Clark Co., Cleveland, 1919), Vol. I.
5. Earle, Alice Morse, *Child Life in Colonial Days* (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1889).
   Colonial Dames and Good Wives (Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1895).
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   Customs and Fashions in Old New England (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1893).
   Home Life in Colonial Days (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1898).
6. Groves, Ernest R., *The American Family* (J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, 1934), Ch. V.
7. Lawrence, H. W., *The Not-Quite Puritans* (Little Brown and Company, Boston, 1928), Chs. III–IX.
8. Putnam, Emily, *The Lady* (G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1910), pp. 282–323.

CHAPTER VI

EVOLUTION OF THE MODERN FAMILY IN ENGLAND AND AMERICA

A REVIEW of family history up to the close of the eighteenth century reveals the patriarchal plan of family organization still firmly established. The family had one ruling head, the father, and the position not only of children but of the wife was one of subordination to his will. At the present time, when certain well-intentioned persons show a disposition to bewail the departure of the good old times when family life revealed a unity and a solidarity that it no longer possesses, it is well to remember that these characteristics were secured at the expense of the free development of women and children, who lived under a rule of obedience to the family head which, while not invariably harsh and repressive, tended to become both in the hands of undisciplined men with a taste for power. Writing in 1776 to a husband of uncommonly liberal spirit, Abigail Adams urges him to make a new code of laws for Massachusetts which shall grant larger freedom to wives: "Do not," she writes, "put such unlimited power into the hands of husbands. Remember, all men would be tyrants if they could. . . . That your sex are naturally tyrannical is a truth so thoroughly established as to admit of no dispute; but such of you as wish to be happy willingly give up the harsh title of master for the more tender and endearing one of friend. Why, then, not put it out of the power of the vicious and lawless to use us with cruelty and indignity with impunity? Men of sense in all ages abhor those customs which treat us only as the vassals of your sex. . . ."[1]

Even at the time that this appeal was penned, however, the patriarchal family was beginning to be undermined by economic and social movements—movements that were to gain tremendous headway as the decades advanced and to bring about the overthrow of this antiquated system.

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[1] *Familiar Letters of John Adams and His Wife Abigail Adams During the Revolution,* edited by Charles Francis Adams (Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1875).

ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CHANGES

The Industrial Revolution.

No doubt the paramount factor at work in the transformation of the patriarchal family into the individualized family group of the twentieth century was the economic one. In England first began the effort to improve the instruments of production which was to eventuate in revolutionizing industry. It is a striking fact that, until the second half of the eighteenth century, our forebears in Europe were using much the same plough, spindle, and loom that had been employed for 2,000 years and more. Not only was industry based upon handwork, but the implements in use had not materially changed since ancient times. Most of the labor required to secure the necessities of life was carried on in the household by the head of the family, assisted by his wife and children and a few apprentices. In the eighteenth century the textile industry, centered in the counties of Yorkshire, Somersetshire, Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, and Dorsetshire, was carried on under the cottage system. Daniel Defoe vividly describes this type of manufacturing, which he had observed in the course of his travels through these counties about 1745. He refers to the houses "full of lusty Fellows, some at the Dyevat, some at the Loom, others dressing the Clothes; the Women and Children carding or spinning; all employed from the youngest to the oldest; scarce anything above *four years old,* but its Hands were sufficient for its own Support." [2]

By the middle of the eighteenth century the demand for British cotton and woolen cloth and iron goods had outgrown the supply and it became imperative to find some means of increasing production. The process of spinning yarn was especially slow, eight or ten spinners being required to keep one weaver employed. Since necessity is the mother of invention, the need was met by the invention of the spinning jenny, an implement that could spin eight threads at a time. This contrivance was invented by Hargreaves in 1764. Later improvements were made by Arkwright, who invented the spinning-wheel driven by water-power. In 1779 Crompton invented the spinning mule, a machine which combined the best points of the other two contrivances and had the great advantage of spinning a thread fine enough to weave into a thin muslin.

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[2] *A Tour Thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain* (4th ed., 1748), Vol. III, pp. 137–139. Italics mine.

Because of these inventions the supply of cotton, woolen, and linen yarn began to exceed the capacity of the workers to weave it into cloth. The great need of the hour was a loom operated by something other than man-power. This need was partially met by the invention of the power loom by a clergyman named Edward Cartwright. No doubt this machine would seem a crude affair in modern eyes, since it was operated by an ox walking round and round in a ring. Experiments with water-power proved this source of energy to be not altogether reliable, and experiments began to be made with steam as a motive power. These resulted in 1785 in the invention of the steam-engine by James Watt, a Scotch engineer. Within a few years steam-engines were being used, not only in mines, but to work the looms in the new spinning, weaving, and knitting factories that sprang up like mushroom growths in many shires of England.

With the introduction of factories equipped with power machinery, the domestic system of industry was doomed. Handicraftsmen with their families flocked to the rapidly growing towns and manned the new machines in the factories. Then began that urbanization of England which has continued to the present time. Tickner states that in 1685 only 20 per cent of the people of England lived in cities, whereas in 1922 79 per cent of the population was urban.[3] Following hard upon the influx of the hand-workers to the factory towns went the creation of a housing problem. Flimsy shacks were built for the thousands of workers, into which they crowded with their families, and the era of industrial slums was begun. The gardens or little farms that had occupied the craftsmen in their spare time in the country were known to them no more.

Out of these changed conditions in industry came a transformation of the lives of women and children. The early spinning machines were so simple and light that a young boy or girl could tend them. Likewise weaving machines could be operated as well by women as by men. Now, since women and children would work for much smaller wages than men, they were employed in ever-growing numbers in the factories. This threw men out of employment and caused not only a shortage of money with which to maintain families but a marked deterioration in the character of family life among the laboring class. A mother who had been working fourteen to sixteen hours in a factory had neither time nor strength for domestic tasks when she reached home at night. Deprived of the care of the mother and often of both parents, children grew up with almost no nurture or guidance; or else they accompanied their parents to the factories to be cruelly exploited there to the limit of their strength. The brutality, the stupid inhumaneness of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries reached its peak in industry, where heart-rending cruelties were practised on little children, especially paupers, to extract from them the maximum labor of which they were capable during a day that ranged from thirteen to eighteen hours. Men and women received little better treatment. Homes became places in which exhausted workers snatched a few hours of sleep before returning to labor; and meals were feverishly devoured in the brief moments of respite allowed for this purpose. It appeared as if England had produced a monster that was destroying its laboring class, once so sturdy and self-reliant.

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[3] F. W. Tickner, *Women in English Economic Life* (1923), p. 116.

Fortunately, state interference to improve the conditions of the workers began with the Act of 1802 which restricted the labor of pauper children to *twelve hours a day* and forced their employers to provide better workshops and sleeping places for them. From this time on public-spirited men in England strove unceasingly to write laws upon the statute books that would better the condition of factory laborers. Acts were passed by Parliament in 1819 and in 1833 which limited the hours of labor for children; and by 1850 "no woman or child could work except between 6 A. M. and 6 P. M. in summer and 7 A. M. and 7 P. M. in winter, with no Saturday work after 2 P. M." [4]

It should not be inferred from the gloomy account above that the Industrial Revolution worked only evil to family life and to women and children. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Although this economic change wrought much hardship, especially in its first century, it has proved the most potent of all social forces in freeing married women from those feudal disabilities with respect to ownership of property and recognition before the law that had persisted into modern times. After women had abundantly demonstrated that they could earn their own livelihood outside the home and, partly at least, support their families, liberal-minded men began to question the justice of depriving a woman of her wages in order to turn them over to her husband, who might be a thriftless parasite. This raised the question of whether it was fundamentally just to require that a woman at marriage should surrender all her real property into the management of her husband and all her personal belongings to his absolute ownership. After the middle of the nineteenth century, organized agitation was carried on by both men and women to secure the removal by parliamentary action of these medieval injustices. It has frequently been remarked that "he who holds the purse wields the power"; and when women had proved their ability to achieve financial independence, no longer looking to father or husband for their support, one by one the old restrictive laws were altered or removed from the statute books.

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[4] Tickner, *op. cit.*, pp. 149–150.

To the enormous influence of the new economic movement in freeing married women must be added the effect of the novel theories disseminated during the French and American revolutions—theories which declared the fundamental rights of man to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." To be sure, the doctrine that a democracy exists to promote and secure equality of opportunity for every one was not at first applied to women. Yet, as conditions changed, the applicability of this theory to the feminine half of humanity began to be perceived by fair-minded men.

One of the most important outcomes of the Industrial Revolution was increased leisure for women of the prosperous classes. Little by little these women saw the removal of one occupation after another from the home to the factory. Oil lamps, and later gas and electricity, took the place of candles; cotton, linen, and wool were spun in the factories; and the power loom wove these threads into cloth with a rapidity that sounded the knell of hand industry. So the spindle and the loom were put into a corner, later to be transferred to the attic, and the busy housewife found herself with unemployed time on her hands. Leisure for women, together with the new points of view created by the political revolutions of the waning eighteenth century, brought about a more thorough and liberal education of middle-class women than the world had ever before seen. New schools sprang up in England and America that gave to girls a solid education such as the boarding and "finishing" schools of the eighteenth century had never contemplated. Even more revolutionary was the founding of women's colleges, first in America, a little later in England. Clearly women were not only to be made free, but intelligent in the use of their freedom.

NEW DOMESTIC LEGISLATION IN ENGLAND

Married Women's Property Acts.

It is a well-known fact that laws remain upon the statute books long after the conditions that created them have basically changed. Therefore it is not surprising to learn that until after the middle of the nineteenth century no steps were taken in England to extend the rights of married women. In 1857 an act was passed providing that a wife deserted by her husband might apply to a magistrate for a protection order which would safeguard from her husband's seizure any property or wages she had scraped together *after the desertion*. In 1861 another act was passed exempting a wife whose husband had been convicted of a serious assault upon her person from cohabiting with him. This early legislation, of course, benefited only deserted or abused wives. However, public opinion in England was being slowly educated to the acceptance of more liberal laws respecting married women's property. In 1870 came the first long step forward in the passage of the Married Women's Property Act which granted to wives (1) the sole and absolute ownership of their earnings and savings bank deposits; (2) the rents and profits of their real estate, which, however, must continue to be administered by the husband; (3) the ownership of any personal property not in excess of £200; (4) the right to insure their own or their husband's lives for their separate use.[5] Manifestly this act was a compromise which satisfied neither the conservatives nor those liberals who were urging the complete emancipation of married women's property from the old feudal disabilities. The final step was taken in 1882 when Parliament enacted a law granting to wives entire control over their property. The provisions of this famous act may be briefly summarized as follows: (1) The married woman was granted the absolute ownership of all property belonging to her at marriage or acquired by her thereafter, including earnings and property secured by her own labor or skill; (2) she was given the right, as an independent person before the law, to sue and be sued, to contract, and to take legal action in her own name and without her husband's consent with respect to all property belonging to her *before marriage*; (3) the husband was released from liability for his wife's antenuptial debts and for the payments of fines incurred by her for torts; (4) the wife with property of her own was made liable to support her husband (if he were a pauper), as well as her children and grandchildren, out of her separate estate.[6] Thus at a blow the law struck from married women the shackles that had cramped their lives since the twelfth century.

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[5] *Chitty's Statutes,* VIII, pp. 709–712.

A law placed on the English statute books in 1925 abolishes the ancient privileges of dower and curtesy which gave wives and husbands rights of inheritance in the estate of a deceased partner. By the terms of this act dower and curtesy have been swept away and either husband or wife has the legal right to make a will excluding spouse and children from any share in his (or her) property.

Guardianship of Children.

In the matter of the guardianship of children, Parliament took more conservative action. Up to 1886 the English law recognized the father as sole guardian of his children, denying to the mother who bore and nurtured them any right to determine important questions such as the character of their education, their religious instruction, their medical care, and the like. A husband who was on unfriendly terms with his wife might even take her children from her into his sole custody or place them in charge of a guardian appointed by him. Moreover, he alone had the right to appoint a guardian for his children at his death. The Guardianship of Infants Act (1886), while still granting to the father sole rights of guardianship during his lifetime, conceded to the mother equal rights in the custody and care of her children with any guardian whom the father might appoint at his death. If the father were incapacitated the mother might appoint a guardian to act with her.[7] The inequity of this statute is obvious enough. Its gross discrimination against mothers is based not alone on custom but on economic considerations as well. Very possibly the discrimination may not be wholly removed until married women are more commonly financial contributors to the family support. The fact that a man is liable in the first instance for the support of his children is held by English law to justify his privilege as sole guardian during his lifetime. That the services of the mother as homemaker, nurse, and teacher have real monetary value and could not be replaced without a heavy drain upon the husband's purse is a fact not yet admitted by the vast majority of England's lawmakers. However, in one respect the law has been liberalized in recent years. By an act passed in 1925 the principle is laid down that equality in law between the sexes should obtain with respect to guardianship of infants. Therefore, when a question is before the court concerning the custody or property of a minor child the court lays down the further principle that it will regard the welfare of the child as the paramount consideration in deciding the matter—not the time-honored rights of the father.[8] Needless to say, this is not equivalent to granting equal rights in the guardianship of children to mothers.

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[6] *Ibid.*, p. 713 *et seq.*

[7] Cleveland, *Women under the English Law*, pp. 295–296.

Divorce.

In the matter of divorce England was likewise tardy in revising her medieval law and custom. Under the powerful influence of the Anglican Church, which inherited all the prejudices of its Roman Catholic predecessor against divorce, no attempt was made to revise the divorce code until 1857. In that year the Matrimonial Causes Act was passed by Parliament. By the terms of this law, which was bitterly opposed by the clerical party, the Church lost all its ancient rights of jurisdiction in cases of marriage and divorce. These rights were removed from the spiritual courts and vested in a newly established civil "Court for Divorce and Matrimonial Causes." Although this step marked a real advance, it did nothing to rectify an ancient wrong; for the old inequality in the rights of husband and wife with respect to the causes of divorce was perpetuated in the new statute. The husband might secure a divorce if he could prove the infidelity of his wife. Furthermore, he might include in his petition for divorce a claim for damages against his wife's lover, the money to be "applied by the court for the benefit of the children of the marriage or for the maintenance of the wife." On the other hand, the wife who sued for divorce must prove not only the infidelity of her husband but in addition the fact of cruelty or desertion for two years or more. Furthermore, no right to sue for damages was conceded to the wife. So inequitable a law did not fail to arouse protests from a small group of fair-minded Englishmen, of whom Gladstone was one. But it is an astonishing fact that the law was permitted to remain upon the statute books until 1923. In the summer of that year the law was amended so that the causes for divorce were equalized in the case of husband and wife. However, England has up to now refused to enact legislation increasing the causes for divorce. A Royal Commission on Divorce, appointed by Edward VII in 1909, made a majority report in 1912 in favor of increasing the causes of divorce to include cruelty, desertion, insanity (pronounced incurable after a period of years), habitual drunkenness, or life imprisonment under a commuted death sentence. But this recommendation, humane as it may seem to many, was in advance of public opinion and was not acted upon. The hold of the Anglican Church upon the minds of Englishmen is still too strong for them to regard this question dispassionately. However, the time is probably not far distant when they will see that divorce is a social problem, which can be justly solved not by application of ecclesiastical dogmas but by the principle of securing to men and women the largest possible amount of happiness and well-being consistent with the general good. It is surely a debatable question whether the refusal to release from the bonds of matrimony men and women who are chafing against an intolerable yoke does not breed more evil in the social body, in the form of secret intrigues and miserable homes, than is caused by the liberal divorce laws of America. That England is almost ready to liberalize her ironclad divorce law is shown by the fact that in November, 1933, a bill was introduced into Parliament providing six causes for divorce—the same grave causes recommended by the Royal Commission in 1912. Some relief from the misery of an unhappy marriage has long existed in England in the form of *judicial separations* granted by the court for the causes of adultery and desertion but denying to the parties the right of remarriage. *Separation orders* are also granted by magistrates to complaining spouses for a variety of causes and are popular among the poor.

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[8] Crofts, *Women under English Law* (1928), p. 49.

REVISION OF DOMESTIC RELATIONS LAWS IN AMERICA

Beginning earlier than in England, the movement to revise the domestic code in the United States has, nevertheless, labored under a serious handicap. Whereas in Great Britain a single act of Parliament sufficed to emancipate all the married women of the nation from property disabilities, in this country progressive legislation has been forced to wait upon the slow enlightenment of public opinion in forty-eight States which are autonomous commonwealths. It is hardly necessary to add that the rate of progress in the various States differs markedly, some Northern, Eastern, and Western States being far in advance of most of the commonwealths of the South.

Removal of the Property Disabilities of Married Women.

The first step toward freeing wives from the restrictions laid upon them by medieval law was in the direction of granting them the right to make wills disposing of such property at their death as their husbands might not legally claim. Prior to the Civil War at least seven States had taken such action, namely Connecticut (1809), Ohio (1835), Alabama (1843), Pennsylvania and New York (1848), Virginia (1849), and Michigan (1850). But the States were disposed to move very slowly in the matter of granting to married women the right to own and manage their property by gift or bequest. The State of Maine, the first to accord this right to wives in (1844), was followed by Florida in 1845, Pennsylvania and New York in 1848, and Michigan and Massachusetts in 1855.

During the conflict between North and South, progressive legislation was thrust into the background. After 1865, however, one State after another set about the reform of its domestic relations code with respect to married women's property. Curiously enough, States that were willing to give wives the full ownership of real and personal property were reluctant to grant them command of their wages. For example, in the States of North Carolina and Tennessee, married women were denied the full ownership and control of their wages until well into the twentieth century; and the statutes of Texas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Arizona, California, Idaho, and Georgia even now (1934) declare a wife's wages to be the property of her husband unless she is living separately from him! Florida stands alone in requiring a married woman to file a petition in the Circuit Court praying for the right to control her own estate. This is referred to a master in chancery, and if he responds favorably to the appeal the judge of the Circuit Court may grant her petition. In a section of the South that once constituted part of the Louisiana Purchase, and in the territory acquired from Mexico after the war in 1848, a further impediment to the full ownership and control of property by married women lies in the fact that this vast domain was originally governed by French and Spanish codes. Therefore in the States carved out from this territory the custom of "community property" exists. This means that, although a married woman may own and control as freely as a *feme sole,* all real and personal property that belonged to her before marriage, any property accumulated by either husband or wife after marriage, by labor, gift, devise, or bequest, belongs jointly to them both, *but is administered and controlled by the husband.* At the death of either husband or wife the surviving spouse may take one half of the community property.[9]

Removal of Legal Disabilities.

One by one the States of the Union have largely revised those ancient laws that denied legal personality to a wife and thus precluded her from making contracts, bringing suit to defend her rights, or acting as surety for any person. Yet in this field much remains to be done. In only twenty-three States have married women an absolute right of contract with a few minor restrictions, although in five of the eight community-property States they may contract without limitation except with regard to community property, where the right of contract resides in the husband only. In four of the eight States, however, the husband may not convey community property without his wife's expressed consent. The States of Alabama, Indiana, Kentucky, Minnesota, North Carolina, and West Virginia deny to a married woman the right to convey real estate unless her husband joins with her in the conveyance. In four other States, the only limitation upon a wife's right of contract is the provision that both husband and wife must join in conveyance of the homestead. Idaho, Michigan, and Nebraska grant a married woman absolute right of contract only over her separate estate. In all other cases common-law disabilities of a married woman as to contract remain in these States. Various restrictions upon a married woman's rights of contract exist in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, Pennsylvania, Florida, Georgia, and Texas. In the last-named State a wife has practically no right to contract except with the consent of her husband.[10]

Guardianship Laws.

The influence of English common law in denying to the mother any rights of guardianship of her children may be clearly seen in the codes of the forty-eight States of the American Union. Very slowly has the idea gained headway that the mother should be granted equal rights with the father in the settlement of all important matters affecting the welfare of children, such as health, religion, education, work, and the like. Nevertheless, great strides have been made within the last twenty years in equalizing the guardianship rights of parents. As recently as 1912, fifteen States in the South, thirteen in the North, and four in the West ignored the mother's rights and vested all power in the father as "the natural guardian of his children." Guardianship privileges were granted to the mother only after the father's death or desertion.[11] At the present time thirty-nine commonwealths have passed equal guardianship laws. Pennsylvania, however, qualifies the mother's right by the provision that she shall be a fit person and shall contribute to the support of the child, thus revealing the economic basis of the law. Only the States of Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas, and Vermont still refuse to recognize the mother's rights of guardianship in the children she has borne. And only one of this group —Georgia—still retains the barbaric law that permits a father to will away the custody of his unborn child without the mother's consent! [12] It is noteworthy that, with the exception of Vermont, these backward commonwealths are all in the South. This section of the country has always been more dominated by English tradition and custom than any other. Moreover, the pre-war life of Southern gentlemen on scattered plantations like English manorial estates has not proved conducive to progressive thinking upon social questions. In recent times signs are not lacking that new economic conditions and the spread of popular education are breaking down the deep-rooted conservatism of the South.

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[9] The facts concerning the present situation are taken from *A Survey of the Legal Status of Women in the Forty-eight States* (1930), published by the National League of Women Voters.

[10] See *A Survey of the Legal Status of Women in the Forty-eight States,* pp. 9, 10.

Certain inequities still remain even in the more advanced communities: (1) In no State of the Union has the wife a voice in the choice of the family home. (2) The mother shares equally with the husband in the earnings of minor children only in thirty-one States. These are Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Idaho, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Washington, West Virginia, and Wyoming. (3) No State permits a wife to collect for services performed in the home. She is entitled to support by the husband, but the extent of this support is entirely in his hands. If the matter is taken into court, the support provided by the judgment is quite often meager. Moreover, support by the husband has no relation to the wife's services in the home. (4) In the States of Arkansas and West Virginia the father is given the preference in inheritance of the property of a deceased child.[13]

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[11] Wilson, *The Legal and Political Status of Women in the United States* (1912). See laws of different States.

[12] *A Survey of the Legal Status of Women in the Forty-eight States* (1930), p. 15.

Common-Law Marriages.

By the term *common-law marriages* is meant those informal unions resting merely upon the consent of the parties, expressed before witnesses or even privately, and followed by living together as man and wife in a common home. No license is required of the parties, and quite commonly such marriages are not registered. Most European countries abolished these irregular unions during the sixteenth century, but the "common law" of England tolerated them two centuries longer and did not eradicate them until the Hardwicke Act of 1753, which attached severe penalties to the celebration of a marriage without banns or license and by any person except a clergyman of the Anglican Church. Because of the preponderance of English settlers in many of the American Colonies, common-law marriages were occasionally formed in Colonial times, although frowned upon by the authorities. After the American Revolution these informal unions became more common and were recognized as legal by many States. At the present time only seventeen States [14] have abolished common-law marriages by statute, but in eight other commonwealths these unions are not recognized as legal, although no statute has been enacted abolishing them. Thus twenty-three States still recognize these self-marriages in 1934, although the evils springing from them are perfectly apparent. The status of the common-law wife and her right to share in the estate of a deceased husband are frequently the cause of court action, and the difficulties of proving that a common-law marriage and not an illicit relationship was entered into are very real. The same disadvantages attach to the children of these unions when their status and inheritance rights are in question. It seems clear that every State sanctioning these clandestine unions should wipe such sanction off the statute books as was done in Europe centuries ago.

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[13] *Ibid.,* pp. 13–15.

[14] In the legislative session of 1934 common-law marriages were abolished by implication in New York State. The new law requires the solemnization of *all* marriages by civil or religious officials.

Divorce Legislation.

After the American Revolution the States of the new Republic began to revise their divorce codes. One by one the States in the Middle Atlantic and Southern sections followed the lead of New England and permitted divorce for certain specified causes. At first jurisdiction in matters of divorce was very generally lodged in the State assembly, but late in the eighteenth century the New England States began to enact statutes transferring authority in divorce cases from legislative bodies to the courts. Following the example of her sister States, Maine, which had been separated from Massachusetts and constituted a State in 1820, vested jurisdiction in divorce cases in the supreme judicial court. Of the Middle States, New York and New Jersey enacted statutes after the Revolution granting authority over divorce to the courts. In Pennsylvania and Delaware, however, legislative divorce lingered on side by side with judicial divorce until the adoption of new State constitutions, by Pennsylvania in 1874 and Delaware in 1897, finally gave the deathblow to this dual practice.[15]

In the Southern States judicial divorce was established only tardily. After the Colonies had achieved independence "it was more than half a century in Virginia and Maryland, and many years in North Carolina, before the courts were granted even partial jurisdiction in divorce causes." [16] Divorces, however, were granted during this period by the State assemblies. Except for a brief period, South Carolina has up to the present time consistently refused to grant divorce for any cause whatever.[17] Georgia divided authority in divorce causes between the superior court and the legislature until 1849, when the Assembly was deprived of all jurisdiction.

It is interesting to note that, during the territorial stage of their history, and in some instances for a subsequent period, many Western States lodged authority in divorce causes with the legislative assemblies, although the statute adopted for the Northwest Territory in 1795 vested jurisdiction in the general court and the circuit courts. One by one, as the States of the Middle Western and Far Western groups emerged from the status of territories to full Statehood, each commonwealth sooner or later enacted a statute empowering the supreme court, the circuit courts, or the court of common pleas to have sole jurisdiction in divorce causes.

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[15] See Howard, *A History of Matrimonial Institutions,* Vol. III, pp. 99–101.

[16] Howard, *op. cit.,* Vol. III, p. 31.

[17] For six years (1872–1878) the courts were given power to grant absolute divorces for two causes, adultery and desertion. The law was repealed in 1878.

The further history of divorce in America is concerned with (1) increasing the causes for absolute dissolution, (2) elaborating the conditions under which a divorce may be granted, (3) making suitable provisions for alimony and the custody of children and (4) enacting decrees with respect to remarriage of the parties to a divorce. The trend toward increasing the number of causes for divorce was very general during the nineteenth century, with the exception of the two commonwealths of South Carolina and New York. As we have seen, the former State has had no divorce law upon the statute books since the repeal of the short-lived law of 1872; and New York recognizes only the scriptural cause of adultery as ground for the dissolution of marriage. However, a bill was introduced in the New York Legislature in 1934 providing that desertion should be an added legal cause for divorce. The bill failed of passage. The State of Ohio wrote six causes into her statute of 1804 and increased the grounds for divorce to ten in 1853; and the State of New Hampshire, beginning in 1791 with four causes, increased the number to fourteen in 1854. It should be noted, however, as Howard has pointed out, that "not less than seven [of these causes] have to do with absence or desertion of one or the other of the persons under various conditions." [18]

With regard to matters of alimony, property arrangements, and the custody of children, the States have enacted legislation not differing greatly save in matters of detail. In all the New England States the court is empowered to issue orders for temporary alimony during the pendency of a suit for divorce, and for the custody, care, and education of the children after the decree is granted. Permanent alimony may be granted to the wife and, in the States of Vermont, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts, to the husband also. The statutes of the Southern and

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[18] Howard, *op. cit.,* p. 13.

Western States make provisions similar to those of New England. With respect to the custody of children pending the divorce, however, the Louisiana statute of 1888 provided that, in cases where they were claimed by both husband and wife, the custody belongs to the husband, whether plaintiff or defendant, "unless there shall be strong reasons to deprive him of it." [19] In cases of absolute divorce Louisiana has followed the general practice of granting the custody of minor children to the party who shall have obtained the decree, unless the court decides that he or she is not a suitable guardian.

The legislation of the forty-eight States concerning remarriage after divorce shows greater variation. The general tendency has been to permit complete freedom to both parties to remarry, except for a stipulated period subsequent to granting the decree. In Massachusetts and Maine, the early laws forbade the remarriage of the offending party to a divorce until the death of the former partner. Not until 1853 was the guilty party in the case of a divorce for desertion permitted to remarry. In both these States at the present time the offending person in a divorce suit may not remarry until two years after the decree is granted. In New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island, and Connecticut, no restriction is placed at present upon the remarriage of either party after the decree is granted.

During the nineteenth century the Southern States showed a tendency to be severe in denying the right of remarriage to the offending party in a divorce. But at present most of the commonwealths of the South permit remarriage of the offending person with or without restrictions. In Virginia, power is lodged with the court to decide whether or not the party guilty of infidelity may remarry. North Carolina prohibits the guilty defendant in a case of wilful desertion from remarrying within five years. In the District of Columbia a statute of 1901 denies the offending partner any right of remarriage except with his former spouse.

In the States carved out during the nineteenth century from the great Middle Western and Far Western domain, legislation concerning remarriage showed the same lack of agreement as in the East and South. Some States, as Michigan in its territorial law of 1819, forbade the guilty defendant in a divorce suit on the ground of adultery to remarry until his former spouse was deceased. But these laws were gradually softened until at present, in most Western States, remarriage of both parties to a divorce is permitted. However, it is quite general in the States west of the Mississippi River to require that an interval shall elapse between the granting of the divorce decree and remarriage. This period varies from six months in Kansas, Nebraska, Minnesota, Oregon, and Washington to two years in the case of the innocent person and three years in the case of the guilty in the State of Montana.

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[19] Howard, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

SUMMARY

A survey of the family history of the nineteenth century shows a gradual transformation taking place in the economic and legal position of married women and in the general character of the home. The wife in England and America was released from coverture and given the control of her property and wages. She was granted recognition by the courts as a legal person, thus abolishing the age-old submergence of a wife's personality in that of her husband. Slowly but steadily the States of the American Union have revised their divorce legislation in the direction of greater liberality, with respect to both the causes of divorce and rights of remarriage. All this means that the head of the twentieth-century family has been shorn of much of his power and prestige. The patriarchal family of ancient times can no longer be found in its pure form save in Oriental lands, in the Near East, in the villages and small towns of the Slavic nations, and possibly in parts of Italy and Spain. Even in these countries its disappearance before the march of contemporary forces would seem to be only a matter of time. The death-knell of this ancient family type has been clearly sounded in every progressive country—even in Turkey. But the form that the family will assume in the coming years no careful social writer will confidently prophesy.

TOPICS FOR REPORTS

1. The laws governing marriage, guardianship of children, married women's property rights and divorce in the most recent code of your own State.
2. Relaxation of Family Discipline in America during the Nineteenth Century.

   Calhoun, A. W., *A Social History of the American Family from Colonial Times to the Present* (Arthur H. Clark Co., Cleveland), Vol. II, Ch. III.

3. Influence of the Developing Factory System on the American Family.
   Ibid., Vol. II, Ch. IX.
4. Effects of the Civil War on the Family.
   Ibid., Vol. II, Ch. XIX.
5. Changes in the American Family during the Nineteenth Century.
   Goodsell, Willystine, "The American Family in the Nineteenth Century," in *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 160, March, 1932, pp. 13–22.
6. Domestic Relations Laws of Contemporary England.
   Crofts, Maud I., *Women under English Law* (Butterworth and Co., London, 1928), Chs. II, III.

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9. Howard, Geo. E., *A History of Matrimonial Institutions* (The University of Chicago Press, 1902), Vol. II, pp. 73–120; Vol. III, pp. 5–10, 31, 82, 114–120.
10. Mansfield, Edward, *The Legal Rights, Liabilities and Duties of American Women* (John P. Jewett and Co., Salem, 1845), pp. 270–273.
11. Wilson, Jennie, *Legal and Political Status of Women in the United States* (1912), *passim.*

PART TWO

SOCIAL CONDITIONS REACTING UPON THE FAMILY

CHAPTER VII

THE INSTABILITY OF THE FAMILY

ALTHOUGH one social institution after another—notably the church, government, and law—has been compelled by profound social changes to revolutionize its theory and procedure, the family institution has remained relatively unchanged up to recent times. Within the last two generations, however, the social and economic forces silently at work for more than a century undermining the unity of the family have effected transformations in the home dramatic in their rapidity and extent. From being the institution most immune to social change, the family has become one in which change is revolutionary and far-reaching. In the preceding chapters a brief sketch was given of the origins and character of those social movements that have transformed the unified patriarchal family of ancient times into the unstable, individualized family group of the twentieth century. And the end is not yet. With a swiftness and inevitability that appals conservative minds, the process of individualization goes on; and, within a generation or two, "father-power," even now shrunken to a mere shadow, may become little more than a name for an interesting historic phenomenon.

Such a rapid metamorphosis could not proceed without evoking gloomy prophecies from students of social institutions. Since the dawn of the twentieth century certain of these have foretold the doom of the monogamic family—its utter extinction or its transmutation into a form so different as to be unrecognizable. These men argue that since personal liberty is an essential condition of social progress, the disintegration of the old coercive family, with its hierarchy of authorities, is the price that society must pay for individual freedom and equality. In view of these statements, it behooves all thoughtful students of social institutions to consider the facts and seek to arrive at some conclusion, however tentative, with regard to the functions of the family in the society of the future. Is the monogamic family in truth an outworn institution, useful in olden times when individuals acted largely in groups governed by rigid codes, but unable to adapt itself to the unhampered individualism of the present age? Or is it possible that out of this period of flux will emerge a finer, more spiritual type of family life than any the world has yet known—one consciously providing the largest measure of individual freedom consistent with personal and social good?

EVIDENCES OF FAMILY DISINTEGRATION AND ITS CAUSES

Evidences of the increasing instability of the family, of its tendency to break up into its component units, are not far to seek. Generations ago in America began that pioneer movement into the untried wilderness of the West that was to result in the practical disappearance of what has been called the "great family," i.e., the group of closely related persons descended from the same grandfather or great-grandfather and often residing in the same locality or even in the same household. The family in the sense of a group of more or less closely related kinsmen is rapidly becoming non-existent, and with it is vanishing the hereditary homestead. How many adults in America to-day can point with affectionate pride to the homes of their fathers? The pioneer spirit, the love of adventurous change of a pioneer people, has dispersed the members of the old family stocks over the face of the American continent. Calhoun holds that the practical disappearance in America of the "great family" of olden times, which is still so strong a unit in France and Italy, has also been furthered by the American conception of marriage as a union of a single man and woman—not of two families. He cites the Frenchman Gohier's comment that in America one marries the girl, not the whole family.[1]

With the dispersion of families over the unsettled tracts of America has come about the decline not only of family unity and solidarity but also of the ancient cult of the family. Who, in this hurried, individualistic age of self-aggrandizement and self-expression, holds up before youth the ideals and achievements of their ancestors, the honored place they carved out in social and political life, as did the Romans of old? Again, what has become of the religion of hearth and home?—what, indeed, of the family hearth itself as the unifying center of household activities? A variety of centrifugal forces are at work in society to reduce the lamp and hearth-fire of family life to the status of interesting historic relics and to drive the individual members of the household in different directions, each seeking his own congenial group for recreation and amusement.

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[1] *A Social History of the American Family from Colonial Times to the Present,* Vol. III, p. 169.

To these evidences of family instability may be added others of a more disturbing character. As is generally known, the number of divorces in the United States has increased ominously with every decade until the Bureau of the Census in 1932 disclosed the fact that there was one divorce to every 6.1 marriages in the country as a whole. It is probable, however, that this is a rough and somewhat misleading measure of the relationship of divorce to marriage. Critics have suggested that if the marriage rate [2] be compared with the divorce rate over a period of years and the difference of the two be obtained, a more accurate measure of the ratio of marriages to divorces will be secured. Twenty-two years ago, in 1912, the marriage rate was 10.56, the divorce rate 0.99 [3] and the difference between these rates is 9.57, representing the number of unbroken marriages per thousand of the population in that year. Passing on to 1922 the marriage rate was 10.32, the divorce rate 1.35, and the difference 8.97. Five years later the respective rates were 10.16 and 1.62, and the difference 8.54. In 1932 the marriage rate was 7.87, the divorce rate 1.28, and the difference 6.59. It will be seen, then, that in a period of two decades the number of unbroken marriages per thousand of the population has fallen from 9.57 to 6.59—nearly three points.

Another indication of family instability is the long list of "broken homes" recorded by organized social workers—homes deserted by the husband and father who shifts his burdensome responsibilities to organized philanthropy and seeks to start life anew under more agreeable conditions of living. Such a simple method of breaking the chains of an irksome marriage has been dubbed the "poor man's divorce." One by one the forty-eight States of the Union have enacted laws designed to bring the deserter back and compel him to support his wife and children. Possibly the recent trend in State legislation toward making desertion a felony and therefore a legal cause of extradition from another State will operate to lessen the number of family desertions. On the other hand, desertions appear to be increasing. Among ninety-three cities reporting as to desertions in 1928 the rates ranged from 28 to 203 per 100,000 population. The National Desertion Bureau believes that the latter figure more truly expresses the ratio. Out of 145 cities replying to a Bureau questionnaire, 134 declared that family desertion was a "vexing problem." [4]

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[2] This represents the number of marriages per thousand of the population. The divorce rate likewise shows the number of divorces per thousand of the population.

[3] These rates are estimated by the Census Bureau up to 1922.

The weakening of family ties, once universally potent forces, may also be revealed by the relatively low marriage rates among college graduates and by the ever-falling birth rates in civilized countries, together with an apparent increase in childless marriages. With regard to marriage rates in the United States the census reports show a fairly steady rate per thousand of the population in the period from 1900 to 1929. Since that year, however, marriage rates have been decreasing.[5] This decline may probably be explained by the economic depression, which struck this country with peculiar severity. It is just possible, however, that the tendency in the direction of decreasing marriage rates may prove permanent. Certainly the trend toward smaller families is marked and constant in this country as in others. From a birth rate of 25.1 in 1915 the rate has fallen to 17.3 in 1932.[6] Low marriage rates in certain educated groups, together with a decreasing desire for "a quiver full" of children, show that the family has lost in some degree its ancient powerful and universal hold upon men and women.

Certain of the reasons for the impermanence and disunity of the family deserve thoughtful consideration. They may be analyzed into the following causal factors: (1) economic and industrial conditions; (2) the breakdown of paternal authority; (3) the growth of individualism; (4) bad marriage laws; (5) the spread of religious skepticism; (6) the collapse of primary social control; (7) the lack of education for marriage and parenthood.

I. *Economic and Industrial Conditions.*

One determining factor in family instability at present is the virtual disappearance of the ancient land tie and the corresponding urbanization of large numbers of the population. It would be difficult to overestimate the importance of the possession of land in holding families together in olden times. Especially was this true when the land was tilled in common by the various members of the family who lived upon its proceeds. Here was a common industry in which all might share for the good of all. Mrs. Bosanquet states that in England even to-day, in the agricultural communities of Northumberland and Durham, where farm workers are hired by families and wives and daughters work beside the men in the fields, "there is a definite economic inducement for the family to hold together." [7] Needless to say, the massing of people in towns and cities that followed upon the development of the factory system uprooted households from the land and shook the family to its foundations. Ever since the eighteenth century the process of urbanization has proceeded apace in every industrially advanced nation, until the city population considerably outnumbers the rural. Even in the United States, with its vast areas of arable land, the urban population increased almost five times as fast as the rural in the decade 1910–1920. In the latter year the ratio of the urban population to the rural was approximately 18 to 17.[8] During the decade 1920–1930 the migration from farms to cities continued. In 1930 the rural-farm population represented only 24.6 per cent of the total population of the United States —a loss of 3.8 per cent in the ten-year period. On the other hand, the village population increased 18 per cent in the same decade and in 1930 numbered over 23,000,000 people, or 19.3 per cent of the entire population of the country. But the most striking growth was in the urban population which in 1930 numbered 68,954,829 persons, or 56.2 per cent of the total population. Of this urban multitude nearly 30 per cent lived in cities of more than 100,000 people![9]

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[4] See Cahen, *Statistical Analysis of American Divorce,* pp. 16–17, quoting the Report of the National Desertion Committee.

[5] See Eleventh Annual Report on Marriage and Divorce, 1932, p. 1.

[6] Census Report for 1932, Provisional Figures for Live Births . . . , p. 1.

Such a movement of millions from farms to cities has resulted in a profound alteration of family life. Instead of the farm homestead set in its acres there is substituted the apartment of a few rooms; instead of the coöperative labor of father, mother, and children in maintaining their common life, each family member seeks work where he or she can find it; instead of family recreations enjoyed together the tendency is for every individual to go a separate way in search of the type of pleasure and relaxation that appeals to him or her. The farm family is a coöperative unit; the city family is a highly individualized group with relatively few ties beyond those of mutual affection.

If the possession of land worked in common has been a powerful cohesive influence upon the family, the opposite has tended to result from the rapid development of machine industry. As we have seen, the factory system proved at first a gigantic monster, devouring men, women, and children among the poor and bringing about the rapid deterioration of family life. Although legislation in most civilized countries has corrected some of the most flagrant abuses of the system, it still remains true that wages are frequently too low to permit the wife and mother to remain in the home. It is a commonplace to say that millions of women are at work in factories to-day, helping to increase an inadequate family income, whose services are needed in the household to "make a home" for its working members and to care for helpless children. In many instances the well-being of these homes, as well as their permanency, is threatened by such conditions. Poverty is by no means solely the consequence of our present industrial system, but this system tends to breed and aggravate its evils. Whereas under the régime of domestic industry workers might fall back upon farming in periods of industrial depression, such an alleviation of their poverty is impossible at present. Modern industry lays off millions of laborers when times are dull, and thereby adds incalculably to the difficulty of holding families together. It reduces wages in order to pay dividends, and thus sends women and children into wage-earning employments. "Most of the quarrels in married life," says a social worker, "start over money—the lack of money. It's the industrial system that's to blame at bottom rather than the husband or the wife." On the other hand, when one considers the relative stability of the family among the low-paid workers of England, Belgium, Italy, Saxony, and the Ruhr—to mention only a few localities—it must be freely admitted that modern industry is by no means wholly responsible for family breakdowns.

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[7] *The Family,* p. 197.

[8] United States Census of 1920 (Vol. I, p. 58) gives the urban population as 54,304,603 and the rural as 51,406,017.

[9] Abstract of the Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, pp. 15, 18.

The influences of the Industrial Revolution were not restricted to the wage-earner's family. Its effect upon the middle class has been hardly less far-reaching. It has made economic independence respectable for, if not obligatory upon, women of the professional and moderate income class. Ultimately this has spelled freedom for the entire sex—a larger degree of independence than woman has ever before known. No longer can it be said that the home is the center of all the interests of women, the focus of all their plans and endeavors. Absorbed in interesting work, women have discovered that however dear the home may be they can exist without it. More or less aware of this condition, some men refrain from marriage because they fear that the woman of their choice will not make the home her supreme concern and occupation.

II. *The Social Process of Individualization.*

Powerful as are the economic and industrial factors in bringing about family instability, an almost equally potent influence has been the individualistic movement that has been gaining headway since the eighteenth century. Politically this tendency has resulted, in most civilized states, in extending the right of suffrage to every adult male and, recently, to women as well. Legally, the movement has operated to free women and children from the despotic authority of the father and to secure their recognition as individuals before the law. Within the family the process of individualization has perhaps gone farther than in any other social organization. No longer a highly unified group, owing its character and integrity to the will of the household head, the contemporary family, as we have seen, is composed of a number of individuals, each having his or her special rights and privileges guaranteed by law, each demanding that these be respected within the home. Little by little the authority of parents over children has been curtailed, alike by law and by a powerful public opinion. Respect for the individuality of children has increased along with the general respect for personality and the growing conviction that arbitrary methods stunt personal development. Gradually the coercive ties that bound the family together during the long course of social history have been replaced by the spiritual ties of mutual love, sympathy, and daily helpful association. The father has perforce yielded much of his authority to the state, which has constituted itself a super-parent. In its legislation against child labor and in behalf of the compulsory education of children; in its efforts to protect the child against parental cruelty; in its organization of asylums, institutions for defectives, boards of children's guardians, probation systems to deal with juvenile crime and recalcitrancy, the state has gone far in the direction of paternalism. Indeed the alarmed outcries of conservatives are heard from time to time to the effect that the state has encroached too far upon the prerogatives of parents and has become an agent in the spread of family irresponsibility.

The individualizing process has not, of course, been limited to children, but has operated even more dramatically to secure the rights and develop the personalities of women. The so-called "woman movement" of the last two generations is hardly less the offspring of the social tendency toward individualization than it is of changed economic conditions.[10] Historically speaking, individualization of the members of society is a valid mark of advancing civilization, an indication of a highly developed culture, which has abandoned subservience to custom in favor of a social life allowing freer play to the abilities and initiative of the individual. With the break-up of the feudal system, society became more fluid and social classes less rigidly separated. This gave larger freedom to the individual. Later followed the splitting-up of one more unified and authoritative institution—the Roman Catholic Church. In the eighteenth century came the breakdown of the domestic system of industry and the repudiation of an arbitrary kingship in France and America. In all these historic events we may see the breaking-up of ancient institutions that cramped and impeded individual and social growth. Although men were at first the chief beneficiaries of the more flexible life that ensued, with its larger freedom and multiplied opportunities for self-development, it was inevitable that the feminine half of society would increasingly share in it. When women were forced by the economic trend to enter remunerative employments outside their own homes, when they were conceded the advantage of higher education, the knell of the old order of feminine subordination was sounded. To strike from women the shackles of financial dependence on the one hand and of ignorance on the other was to start them on that long course of individuation the end of which is not yet in sight. However much conservatives may deplore the self-reliance of the modern woman, her eager desire for ever more freedom, her insistence on the right to develop her natural gifts to their fullest extent and to use them in ways that are both socially beneficial and personally enriching, these qualities are but the marks of an irresistible individualizing process that has gone even farther in the case of men. Whether this deep social trend will eventuate in the modern world, as in ancient Greece and Rome, in a general tendency toward personal development for purely personal satisfactions, accompanied by growing blindness and indifference to the essential needs of society, no student of social history can foretell.

Needless to say, the individuation of women is responsible for a conspicuous increase among them of restlessness and dissatisfaction with the home as at present constituted. Women who marry after having achieved moderate or considerable success in a congenial career find the narrowness, the restraints, the multitude of petty details of housekeeping almost unbearably irksome, especially if they belong to that large fraction of their sex who have no liking for the domestic arts. Not all families, even in the educated middle class, have incomes that make it possible to ease the drudgery of housekeeping by generous use of electrical appliances. The mechanism of the average home, with its individual cook-stove, wash-tub, and broom, is hopelessly antiquated and imposes upon a gifted and highly trained woman a severe strain. "In America," says Calhoun, "marriage can not enlarge a woman's freedom; in practice it ordinarily burdens her with house-keeping and exposes her to the risk of deterioration." [11]

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[10] Obviously the individualizing tendency is itself, in considerable measure, the product of economic and social circumstances.

III. *Defective Marriage Laws.*

Another condition clearly unfavorable to stable family life is found in our faulty marriage laws. Far from surrounding marriage with reasonable safeguards and preventing insurgent impulse from sweeping the young and thoughtless into matrimony, American marriage laws seem deliberately designed to make the union of the immature, the reckless, and the unfit as easy as possible. Witness the fact that in 1930 twenty-three States still recognized common-law marriages as valid. This means, of course, that nearly half of the commonwealths of the United States are willing to accept the statement of a man and woman that they have taken each other as husband and wife (either before witnesses or not) and have been living in that relation as constituting a valid marriage. Such laxity is striking testimony to the fact that the theory of the marriage relation which was held in the medieval barbarian tribes lives on in the twentieth century. Obviously this easy-going custom may be a fertile source of unstable marriages. Again, it is a startling fact that in twelve States boys may marry at fourteen years of age and girls at twelve with parental consent—another hang-over from the Middle Ages. Add to this the fact that, in at least ten other States, boys and girls may marry with the consent of parents at ages ranging from sixteen years to thirteen years in the case of girls in New Hampshire,[12] and the reader may form some idea of the laxity of marriage legislation in this regard. It would seem axiomatic that no youths, male or female, under the age of eighteen are capable of appreciating the true meaning of marriage or of shouldering its responsibilities. Here again an ancient custom lives on, long after it has served its day, and becomes a distinct menace to happy and enduring family life.

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[11] Calhoun, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, pp. 121–122.

[12] *A Survey of the Legal Status of Women in the Forty-eight States* (1930), pp. 17, 18.

Nor are these the only grave defects in our marriage laws. In 1929 only twelve States had erected any barrier against hasty marriages. The period which must elapse by law between the application for a marriage license and its issuance is fixed in most of these twelve States at five days. But in three, namely, California, Delaware, and New Jersey, the waiting period is respectively only three, one, and two days. However, Delaware adds three days to this period in the case of non-residents of the State, and New Jersey demands an additional day of delay after the license is issued.[13] Therefore, in thirty-six States of this Union, a young couple may secure a license and solemnize their marriage in half an hour, thus being afforded every opportunity to "marry in haste and repent at leisure." The law requires no notice of intention to marry to be published and furnishes no opportunity for the filing or hearing of objections to the marriage. Who can say how many unsuitable and bigamous unions might be prevented by a more enlightened procedure?

On this point Howard writes: "All this is contrary to sound public policy. The notice of intention should be recorded for a reasonable period, say ten days, before issuance of the license; and during this time it should be officially posted, and also published in the newspapers—not merely concealed in the register or published at the discretion of the official, as is now the usual course. Objections might then be filed, and in case of need tried in a court clothed with proper jurisdiction, before the celebration were allowed to proceed. Under the existing State legislation it would be difficult, certainly awkward, to stop a proposed marriage on the ground of alleged illegal impediments. To make an objection effective it might be necessary either to 'anticipate the notice' or to interrupt the nuptial ceremony." [14]

A further defect in our marriage laws lies in the fact that religious celebrants of marriage are not required to be licensed or registered. In thirty-three States there is no official list of those authorized to solemnize marriage according to religious rites. In consequence any minister of the gospel, whether he is connected with a church or not, may celebrate marriage, no inquiry being made into his character and social standing. Only fifteen States have taken steps requiring religious celebrants to file their credentials or obtain clergyman's licenses. In Kentucky, Virginia, and West Virginia, the religious celebrant must give bond for the proper discharge of his duties.[15] In view of the fact that in several States a wide variety of civil officials is permitted to celebrate marriage, ranging from higher judicial officers and justices of the peace to aldermen, police court judges, any notary public, and any officer authorized to administer oaths (South Carolina), it would seem well to place these officials also under bond to perform their duties with a high sense of responsibility.

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[13] Richmond and Hall, *Marriage and the State*, Appendix B, pp. 370–371.

[14] Howard, *A History of Matrimonial Institutions* (The University of Chicago Press, 1904), Vol. III, pp. 191–192.

Probably the most harmful defect in American marriage laws is the general failure adequately to prohibit the marriage of persons suffering from mental and physical disabilities. It is true that in all but two States some legal provision has been enacted designed to protect the parties to a marriage from the terrible consequences following from union with a mental defective or an insane person. Yet these provisions are grotesquely inadequate. For example, the law of California reads: "No license must be granted when either of the applicants is imbecile or insane or is at the time of application under the influence of intoxicating liquor or narcotic drug." [16] But it is left to the license-issuer to determine whether either of the applicants is suffering from the stipulated defects, which may often be temporarily concealed. Pennsylvania's law is quite similar, except that epilepsy is included among the defects which bar issuance of a license. Obviously such laws afford little protection to deluded persons desirous of entering the "holy" state of matrimony. Yet in few commonwealths are the statutes framed so as to render it more easy for the license clerk to determine cases of feeble-mindedness or epilepsy or recurrent insanity and thus preserve applicants for marriage licenses from the grim results of their ignorance or folly. It is possible that in the years to come the States of the American Union will require convincing evidence of mental health, in the form of a certificate issued by a qualified physician or psychiatrist, before permitting marriage licenses to be granted. Such a policy, quite apart from its humane character, should commend itself to lawmakers as one of enlightened self-interest. The saving to every State of part of the huge costs of public care of defectives and the insane would be considerable.

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[15] Geoffrey May, *Marriage Laws and Decisions in the United States* (Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1929), *passim.*

[16] California Code as amended St. 1927, Ch. 687.

With regard to the matter of preventing the marriage of the physically unfit the legislation of the forty-eight States is also halting and backward. Only seven States—Alabama, Louisiana, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oregon, Wisconsin, and Wyoming—require that the male applicant for a license shall present a medical certificate showing freedom from venereal disease. Such blind indifference on the part of lawmakers seems incredible in this age, when knowledge of the devastating effects of the so-called "social diseases" upon personal life and family happiness is more widespread than ever before in history. But the policy in America has been, and still is, to encourage marriage, not to surround it with prohibitions, no matter how wisely conceived these may be. Therefore, the States move slowly toward the final goal of demanding that a medical certificate of freedom from venereal disease, issued by a competent physician, after laboratory tests (if indicated), be required of both parties to a marriage. The timid policy of most States is illustrated by the Michigan law which provides that no person "who has been afflicted with syphilis or gonorrhea and has not been cured thereof, shall be capable of contracting marriage." Violation of this provision "is punishable by fine of from $500 to $1000, imprisonment not exceeding five years, or both; . . ."[17] Obviously such a law is no real safeguard to a young person about to enter the intimacy of the marriage relation. The license clerk has usually no way of detecting the presence of a virulent disease in applicants and the only recourse of the injured party after marriage is to court action, with its degrading publicity, after the harm has been done.

IV. *The Weakening of Religious Sanctions.*

The instability of the contemporary family has also been furthered by the widespread decline of faith in orthodox religion. In the days of our great-grandparents powerful support was given to family unity by the authority of the church and its commanding influence over the beliefs and the moral standards of men and women. Many a home was held together in the past (whether for good or ill) by the fear of going counter to the teachings of the Christian Church, always hostile to divorce, and of alienating friends who were loyal and orthodox church members. The decline of dogmatic religious influence over the minds of men has been proceeding apace since the eighteenth century, when faith in the new method of science and in the authority of human reason began to supplant uncritical acceptance of religious dogmas. Ever since the so-called "Age of Reason" the inroads made by science and a rationalistic philosophy in the domain of religious beliefs have been continually widening. In the eighteenth century only a handful of intellectuals were religious skeptics; to-day doubt and disbelief have penetrated all classes save the ill-educated and the thoughtless. Such a general breakdown of religious sanctions is, perhaps, unprecedented in social history and could not occur without a profound reaction upon the family. Deprived of the supports of religious faith and even trust in traditional morals, the generation that has grown up since the World War has been wandering in a dim land of disbelief without the support of standards of conduct and assured convictions. That there has been much experimentation in irregular forms of sex relations there can be no doubt; that the family has suffered from unchecked individualism—a policy of each one for himself—can hardly be questioned. Yet it is well to remember the lesson told and retold by history that the dying-out of old faiths, no longer capable without drastic change of serving as lodestars of mankind, is but the prelude to the rising of a new guiding star stirring the souls of men to enthusiastic allegiance.

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[17] Quoted in May, *Marriage Laws and Decisions,* p. 207.

V. *The Collapse of Primary Social Control.*

To the breakdown of religious control must be added the almost complete disappearance of another powerful prop of family solidarity—the influence of "clan" and neighborhood opinion. In the olden days when families lived in communities of kindred and of more or less friendly neighbors, who did not hesitate to spy upon, criticize, condemn, and even ostracize erring human beings, husbands and wives as well as ardent and romantic youths were often held to conventional standards of conduct by the potent force of public opinion. Now this social support of lifelong marriage and of pre-marital chastity has all but crumbled to pieces. Under the influence of the urban movement more than half the American people are living in cities where the primary social control exercised by the neighborhood is all but unknown. Living in impersonal apartment houses, ignorant of the individuals living next door, men and women, youths and maidens go their own ways, serenely assured that their "neighbors" will neither know nor care what social standards they disregard as long as their conduct is not too brazenly flagrant. This easy, urban indifference to those living in one's vicinity has played an important rôle in furthering family instability and the breakdown of traditional morals. But this is not to say that the loss of neighborhood influence is a matter for undue concern. In the final analysis the ideals by which men and women live must be wrought out of life itself and tempered in the fires of experience—they cannot permanently be the standards upheld by an unthinking majority in a neighborhood or a nation governed wholly by tradition. It is probable that what is useful and good in the old ideals of family life and personal conduct will survive and continue to guide the lives of men.

VI. *The Lack of Education for Marriage and Parenthood.*

The faith of the American people in the benign effects of popular education is notorious, and the spread of secondary and higher education in this country during the last half-century has been remarkable. Yet in all this extension of educational opportunities to the mass of the people, little effort has been put forth to make them more intelligent regarding the problems of the marriage relation and the wise nurture and guidance of the young. It is quite possible for girls and boys, young men and women, to pass through high school and college with little or no enlightenment on these matters. Yet the questions centering about the family are among the most vital of all concerns to these young people—problems the great majority of youth cannot fail to meet and on the successful solution of which a large part of their happiness depends. The indifference to and neglect of this important province of education seem amazing to the student of society until he recalls that this field of knowledge has until recently been placed under a powerful taboo, from the effects of which it is not yet wholly relieved.

During the last decade, however, some progress has been made in the direction of sex education, the training of parents, and even the enlightenment of young people about marriage. A survey of the *Status of Sex Education in the Senior High Schools of the United States* conducted by the United States Public Health Service in collaboration with the Bureau of Education in 1928 revealed that 44.9 per cent of 5,745 senior high schools replying to a questionnaire were giving some form of sex instruction to students. As the high school principals who were interested enough to fill out the questionnaire represented but 34 per cent of all senior high school principals, and in view of the fact that more than half of the high schools replying offered no sex education, either integrated with other courses or consisting of "emergency" instruction, the record is not altogether encouraging. Yet a beginning has been made in helping young people to understand and solve the problems of sex that will inevitably come into their lives, and it is probable that more extensive spread of sex education will occur in the years to come.

Parenthood education has grown rapidly since the beginning of the twentieth century but its benefits are still too closely confined to the educated and relatively prosperous class which can pay the dues of private societies. Yet even in this field some advance has been made in extending knowledge of the physical care and mental guidance of the child to the rank and file of the people. Some high schools are adding to their offerings in household economy courses in child psychology and training and in the history and social functions of the family. Dr. Leona Vincent of the Merrill-Palmer Nursery School reports that in 1929 hundreds of schools, ranging from the elementary through the graduate departments of universities, were offering classes in pre-parental education.[18]

Not so much has been done with respect to education for marriage. Yet, here and there the country over, colleges are offering instruction in the history and problems of marriage and the family, and more rarely a high school provides for such a course. The University of North Carolina, at the request of the men students, offers a course on marriage which has been successfully conducted for several years. The instructor, Professor Groves, has prepared a textbook embodying some of the information college students are most eager to secure.[19] Perhaps the most effective efforts in the movement for enlightening youths about the marriage relation and its problems before they are plunged suddenly into them are those being made by the Protestant churches. Some theological schools are offering courses to ministers-in-training, informing them of the marital and family difficulties that will inevitably be brought to their attention for advice and help and encouraging them to give instruction to all candidates for marriage who apply to them. Clinics also are being opened in some metropolitan churches to give advice to members of the congregation on their domestic troubles. Much of this educational work, however, valuable as it may be, comes too late to prevent suffering and disillusionment. It would seem an enlightened policy for public and private education to accept its clear responsibility for preparing young men and women to enter the marriage relation with all the knowledge and good-will with which wise and far-seeing instruction can equip them.

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[18] "Preschool and Parental Education," *Twenty-eighth Year Book of the National Society for the Study of Education* (1929), p. 404.

[19] *Marriage* (Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1933).

TOPICS FOR REPORTS

1. The Underlying Causes of Family Desertion.
   Joanna C. Colcord, *Broken Homes,* Ch. II.
2. The Influence of Social Change on the Family.
   A. W. Calhoun, *A Social History of the American Family from Colonial Times to the Present* (Arthur H. Clark Co., Cleveland), Vol. III, Ch. XIV.
3. Attitude of the Church towards Questions of Marriage and Divorce.
   Calhoun, *op. cit.,* Vol. III, Ch. XIII.
4. Problems of the Modern Family.
   G. E. Howard, *A History of Matrimonial Institutions* (The University of Chicago Press, 1904), Vol. III, Ch. XVIII.
5. The Marriage and Divorce Laws of the United States.
   Geoffrey May, *Marriage Laws and Decisions in the United States* (Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1929).
6. Some Social Aspects of Marriage.
   Mary E. Richmond and Fred S. Hall, *Marriage and the State* (Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1929), Part II, pp. 123–213.

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2. Goodsell, Willystine, *A History of Marriage and the Family* (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1934), pp. 457–482.
3. Groves, E. R., *Social Problems of the Family* (J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, 1927), Chs. V, XIV.
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CHAPTER VIII

THE IMPACT OF MODERN INDUSTRY ON THE FAMILY

CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF MODERN INDUSTRY

THE nineteenth century was characterized above all else by the phenomenal growth of the factory system and the supplanting of hand labor by machine industry. So far did the mechanization of industry advance that the labor of production was more and more minutely specialized, until many a workman spent eight or ten hours a day performing at his machine a simple monotonous task which a boy of twelve could readily master.

Since the opening of the twentieth century there has developed in industry an ever-increasing need of unifying the successive operations of machines into one continuous process. Man's ceaseless quest for power, which brought about the machine age, led him to concentrate on the development of electric energy and the erection of hydro-electric plants in which huge amounts of electricity could be generated. A new type of engine was constructed—the steam turbine—to run the new electric generators. After the World War the face of industry changed rapidly. The old stationary combustion engines gave place to the steam turbine, united with an electric generator, which could furnish double the power of the earlier machines. At present the wheels of industry are more and more being turned by means of electric motors with an ever-increasing power capacity as measured in kilowatt hours.[1] Not only has industry to-day more power to utilize in production, but it can use power at greater range. Electric energy generated in one State can turn factory wheels in far-distant States.

Another marked feature of this industrial age is the growth of huge corporations, like the United States Steel Company, the General Motors Company, and the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, which represent enormous aggregations of wealth and power. These monster combinations and holding companies tend to supplant the more modest business organizations of half a century ago and to drive small competitors ruthlessly to the wall. Indeed the whole industrial trend seems to be in the direction of ever-expanding productive units which threaten the existence of smaller corporate groups of whatever sort. In the words of Dike: "The general movement of property has, so far, been like that of a huge glacier, breaking and wearing away into their elementary atoms all forms of corporation, whether political or economical. *Its ultimate atom is the individual;* its favorite corporation is the largest possible combination. The family has in it the greatest cohesive strength, and consequently has most successfully withstood the grinding power that has tended to crush everything subjected to it. . . . It brings the family into the labor market on the same footing as the unmarried. For small provision, at the best, will be made in fixing wages, for the rearing of children, the care of other dependents, and all those little things that make a home. *In the market of wages the family is the accident of the laborer rather than his essential.*" [2]

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[1] See Polakov, *The Power Age* (Covici Friede, Inc., New York, 1933), p. 75.

Together with the growth of vast accumulations of wealth in the hands of a few powerful captains of industry and finance has gone the relative poverty of the masses of the workers. This is by no means to say that poverty is a recent social phenomenon, but only to state that our present system of industry fails to secure to a host of unskilled workers a living wage according to American standards. This is true even though real wages [3] in certain periods have shown an upward trend in the United States. In 1924 the real wages of factory workers in twenty selected industries were approximately 10 per cent higher than their money incomes, taking the average earnings from 1919–1922 as a base.[4]

Finally, as we have seen, modern industry has exercised a profound effect upon the growth and multiplication of cities. It has been said that contemporary industry "is almost equivalent to 'city life,' because the great industry, the factory system, builds cities around the chimneys of steam engines and electric plants." Whether urban life, together with modern industrial conditions, is compatible with health and with enduring family relations is one of the pressing social questions of the age. There is much evidence to show that in the past the combined influence of the two has been responsible for (1) high morbidity and mortality rates among factory workers; (2) high infant mortality rates in certain industrial centers; (3) occupational diseases leading to loss of wages and family breakdown; (4) crowded slums and unsanitary dwellings; (5) employment of women and children outside the home; (6) sweated household industries; (7) commercialized vice and commercialized amusements, almost crowding out social life within the family. On the other hand, it is well to keep in mind certain facts which indicate that city life and machine industry are not necessarily harmful to health and stable family life. For example, despite our expanding cities and industries, the census reports show that infant mortality in the United States dropped from 72 in 1925 to 64.7 in 1930 and to 57.9 in 1932. Moreover, the infant mortality in 1932 was 1.6 points lower in the urban area than in the rural. Adult mortality is also steadily falling and in 1932 reached its lowest rate—10.9 per thousand of the population. Again, in certain States, as New York, the urban death rate is lower than the rural. In our cities, maternity centers and child clinics are rendering valuable aid to the family, relatively little of which reaches the rural areas. Nevertheless, conditions exist in crowded centers of population and industry that are a distinct menace to the stability and wholesomeness of family life.

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[2] "Problems of the Family," *Century Magazine,* Vol. XXXIX, pp. 392–393. Italics mine.

[3] Real wages are reckoned in terms of the purchasing power of the dollar.

[4] See the admirable study by W. A. Berridge, E. A. Winslow, and R. A. Flinn, *Purchasing Power of the Consumer* (A. W. Shaw Company, Chicago, 1925), p. 42.

INCOME, WAGE RATES, AND UNEMPLOYMENT

Disparity in Income Distribution.

Studies of the distribution of wealth and income in the United States reveal some disturbing facts. On the basis of earlier studies, King estimates that in 1910 the percentage of families having an income of less than $1,000 was 69.43; and the percentage having less than $2,000 was 94.86.[5] King's estimates are supported by those of the National Bureau of Economic Research covering the decade 1909–1919. These show that the average annual earnings of laborers in various industries, in factories and in mining, fell below the minimum necessary to maintain a family of five in health and decency. The figures follow: [6]

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[5] Willford I. King, *The Wealth and Income of the People of the United States* (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1915), p. 228.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 228.

AVERAGE ANNUAL EARNINGS OF EMPLOYEES

In various industries		*In mining*		*In factories*	
1909	$ 626	1909	$ 599	1909	$ 571
1913	723	1913	755	1913	705
1918	1,078	1918	1,283	1918	1,148

If the purchasing power of the wage in 1913 be taken as the base (100 per cent), the indices of the purchasing power of wages in the other two years are as follows: [7]

In industries		*In mining*		*In factories*	
1909	90.7	1909	83.0	1909	84.7
1918	94.3	1918	107.5	1918	103.0

The National Bureau has also estimated the personal incomes below $2,000 per annum in every year of the decade 1909–1919. The figures reveal that in 1910 there were 34,352,000 persons, or 96 per cent of all income receivers, who had incomes under $2,000. In 1919, owing to the extraordinary prosperity enjoyed by some individuals as a result of the war, there were 34,233,000 persons, or 86 per cent, having incomes below $2,000. Therefore in 1910 only 4 per cent of the income-receiving citizens of this country had an estimated income of $2,000 or above; and in 1919 only 14 per cent had such an income.[8] These figures are all the more impressive when we recall that the United States has long been regarded as the land of prosperity and opportunity. And, indeed, it was true up to recent times that the condition of the laboring class in this country was markedly better than in most European nations.

A more recent study of the distribution of income, especially among American families, has been made by the Brookings Institution in Washington.[9] Using the Census of 1930 as a basis, the writers estimated that at the end of 1929 there were approximately 27,474,000 families in this country composed of more than one person. The average number of persons in a family was slightly over four. These families received in 1929 an aggregate income of about seventy-seven billion dollars. The median family had an income of $1,700, including in that amount the earnings of women, children, and, other "supplementary earners." [10] This means that half the families had less than $1,700 and half had this amount or more. The wide disparity in income distribution does not become fully apparent, however, until families are more closely classified into income groups. Such a classification reveals that nearly 6,000,000 families, or *more than 21 per cent of the total,* had incomes that fell below $1,000; about 12,000,000 families,[11] *more than 42 per cent,* had incomes less than $1,500; and not far from 20 million families, *or 71 per cent,* received incomes less than $2,500.[12] And this in a conspicuously "prosperous" year (save for the last two months), in a country that has always prided itself on the prosperity of its citizens under the capitalist system!

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[7] *Income in the United States. Its Amount and Distribution* (New York, 1921), p. 102. Condensed from statistics of the National Bureau of Economic Research.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 102.

[9] Leven, Moulton, and Warburton, *America's Capacity to Consume* (The Brookings Institution, Washington, 1934).

But the picture of income distribution in the United States is not complete until the extremes of family income in the lowest and highest levels are contrasted. While the 11,653,000 families at the bottom of the scale received about ten billion dollars in income, an elect group of 36,000 families, enjoying incomes in excess of $75,000, received 9.8 billion dollars. Or, to put the contrast in another way, 0.1 per cent of the families at the top of the scale received practically as much income as 42 per cent of the families at the bottom.[13]

Of the total of 27,474,000 families composed of two or more persons about 5,800,000 were farm families. The average income of these farm families was $1,240—much lower than that of town and urban families, even when allowance is made for the huge incomes of certain city families. More than 54 per cent of agricultural families had incomes under $1,000, and among 25 per cent of the families at the lowest level the *largest* income was $500. Moreover, only 10 per cent of farm families had incomes in excess of $2,600.[14] It may be urged at this point that, although the income of farm families was lower than that of urban family groups, yet the former have the use of foodstuffs and other materials produced on the farms. In computing farm income the authors of the study made allowance for these products by adding their value computed at farm prices [15] to the family incomes received. In so far as foodstuffs and other farm products are concerned, the income of a farm family goes farther than that of one in the city. But, since the farmer pays more for some items in his budget than does the city man, there are social writers who maintain that the advantages of lower costs for shelter and food on the farm are balanced by the number of services, medical, nursing, dental, recreational, and other, that the proletarian city family receives free, or nearly so.[16]

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[10] Leven, et al., *op. cit.,* pp. 52, 55.

[11] These figures are cumulative; each larger group includes the preceding smaller ones.

[12] *Ibid.,* p. 55.

[13] *Ibid.,* p. 56.

[14] *Ibid.,* pp. 58–59.

Incomes and Family Budgets.

The full import of the low incomes received by a high proportion of the adult working population is not brought home to us until these incomes are compared with the amounts estimated to be necessary to bring up a so-called typical family of five on the minimum health and decency level.[17] Several authoritative budget studies of workingmen's families have been made in recent years by trained economists, by bureaus of municipal research, and by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics. These budget studies have been compiled by the Bureau of Applied Economics in Washington, D. C.[18] The minimum health and decency level, which furnishes the working basis of the following studies, should be interpreted to mean:

1. A sufficiency of nourishing food to maintain a "standard" family, consisting of husband, wife and three children under fourteen years of age, in health.
2. Housing in low-rent neighborhoods, with the minimum number of rooms consistent with decency, but with sufficient light, heat, and toilet facilities for the maintenance of health.
3. Upkeep of household equipment.
4. Clothing sufficient for warmth.
5. A surplus over expenditures which would permit a small outlay for street-car fares, a modest insurance, medical and dental care, contribu-

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[15] Farm prices are in general only 60 per cent of city prices for these materials (p. 61).

[16] *Ibid.*, pp. 61–62.

[17] See P. H. Douglas, *Wages and the Family* (The University of Chicago Press, 1925), pp. 5–6. It should be noted that this "standard" or "normal" family is largely a fiction. Many workers have less than three dependent children and a considerable percentage have more.

[18] "Standards of Living," Bulletin, No. 7, 1920.

tions to churches and labor or benefit organizations, simple amusements (as the moving pictures) once in a while, and a daily newspaper.[19]

More recent budget studies made during the economic depression vary in estimates of the cost of living for a so-called "standard" family of five, according to geographic location. An investigation made in 1932 by the Labor Bureau, Inc., in ten selected cities resulted in estimates of living costs of $1,726 in New York, $1,810 in Chicago and $2,039 in San Francisco. The Chicago standard budget for a self-supporting family demands an income of $105.72 a month *without rent,* or $1,268.64 a year. The Heller Committee for Research in Social Economics estimated that in 1933 a family of five in San Francisco would require an income of $1,496 a year. In 1934 the Detroit Visiting Housekeepers' Association calculated that a monthly income of $108.82, or $1,305 a year was necessary to support a "standard" family in health and decency.[20]

The significance of these budget studies is not adequately grasped until they are compared with the wages actually received by large groups of workers at approximately the same periods. For purposes of comparison, Douglas, Hitchcock, and Atkins used as a standard a conservative and carefully planned budget made by the Philadelphia Bureau of Municipal Research in the autumn of 1918. This study fixed $1,637 as the amount necessary to support a family of five at the minimum health and decency level. Because of rising prices the budget was revised in November, 1919, being increased to $1,803. In August, 1920, the budget was again revised and increased to $1,988. When the yearly earnings of male employees in twelve industries, as reported by the National Industrial Conference Board, are compared with the amounts necessary to maintain the modest Philadelphia budget of health and decency, the results are illuminating. In September, 1918, average annual wages in these industries ranged from a low of $904 in furniture manufacturing to a high of $1,452 in rubber manufacturing. In March, 1920, average wages in these industries had risen and the range was from $1,189 in furniture manufacturing to $1,889 in rubber manufacturing. Comparing these wage scales with the Philadelphia standard budget Douglas, Hitchcock, and Atkins estimate the percentage increase in wages in 1918 and 1920 necessary to meet the budget requirements. In 1918 these increases range from 13 per cent in rubber manufacturing to 35 per cent in leather manufacturing and to a high of 81 per cent in furniture making. In that year *not a single industry of the twelve was paying an annual average wage that made it possible for a male worker to maintain a family of five at a minimum standard of health and decency.* Conditions improved in 1920, yet the figures show that in only one industry—rubber manufacturing—did the average annual wage rise very slightly ($4) above budget requirements. In the remaining industries the percentage increases in earnings required to meet the standard budget varied from 2 per cent to 59 per cent.[21]

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[19] *Op. cit.,* summarized from the "Budget for a Government Employee's Family," p. 26.

[20] Pamphlet issued by Women's Bureau on "The Gainful Employment of Married Women," October, 1934, p. 13.

More recently the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, after an investigation of eighty-nine manufacturing industries, reported that the per capita earnings were $17.99 weekly or $899 annually in 1933. In 1934 the Bureau estimated that weekly earnings in those industries had risen to $19.51 and the annual wage to $975—a percentage increase of 8.4. However, the cost of living, taking five major groups of items—food, clothing, rent, fuel, and light—had increased 6.3 per cent from June, 1933, to June, 1934. Similarly, studies made in 1934 by the Illinois Department of Labor in Chicago showed annual per capita earnings of $1,095; by the New York State Department of Labor, $1,223; and by the California Department of Industrial Relations, $1,112. Compare these per capita earnings with the more recent budget estimates cited above, and the deficits will be found to range from over $1,000 at the greatest extreme to about $45 annually at the least, with no allowance for the rise in living costs.[22]

Of course it should not be overlooked that a wage quite inadequate to support a standard family of five will maintain a single man or woman in considerable comfort. Furthermore it should be kept in mind that the so-called standard family cannot accurately be said to exist. It has been estimated that from one fourth to one third of the 24,000,000 persons listed in the Census of 1910 as having incomes ranging from less than $600 up to $1,400 are single. Paul Douglas found that only 17.7 per cent of 11,156 families investigated had three children under fourteen. However, he also found that 11.2 per cent of these families had four dependent children and 4.8 per cent had five or more. In other words, 16 per cent had more than three dependent children and 17.7 per cent had exactly three, making a total of 33.7 per cent of the 11,156 families with three or more dependent children.[23] It seems abundantly clear that no intelligent attempt has yet been made in America to distinguish between the essential needs of the head of a dependent family and those of the unmarried worker with no dependents. This fact serves to emphasize the truth of Dike's statement that in "the market of wages the family is the accident of the laborer rather than his essential."

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[21] Paul H. Douglas, C. N. Hitchcock and W. E. Atkins, *The Worker in Modern Economic Society* (Chicago University Press, 1923), pp. 302–303.

[22] See pamphlet of the Women's Bureau, *op. cit.,* p. 13.

Unemployment and Wage Decline.

The acute industrial depression of the last five years, with its accompaniments of shrinkage in production, decline in the national income, and widespread unemployment, has pressed most heavily upon wage-earners and agriculturists—the low-income groups. The wealthy and powerful class of entrepreneurs, who, together with the leaders of finance, control our present industrial system, seem wholly incapable of preventing periodic drastic crises in industry or of understanding and ameliorating them when they do occur. In consequence, a cruel toll of unemployment and loss of income is exacted of those workers—often heads of families—who are least able to pay it. The recent Report of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce on *National Income 1929–32*[24] furnishes clear evidence in support of these statements. This report shows that the number of wage-earners employed in selected basic industries[25] fell from 12,219,000 in 1929 to 7,131,000 in 1932—a loss of 41.6 per cent. In other words, only 58.4 per cent as many workers were employed in these industries in 1932 as in 1929, and in the present year (1936) the percentage of loss is still high. In addition the per capita income of this group of wage-earners fell from an average of $1,406 in 1929 to $959 in 1932—a loss of 31.8 per cent. *Salaries*, however, in the same industries were, in 1932, 84.7 per cent of their 1929 value. To be sure the Report points out that the cost of living fell proportionately to the drop *in wages and salaries taken together*. But it adds the important warning that the per capita income of wage workers cited above "refers largely to earners employed full time;

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[23] Douglas, *Wages and the Family*, p. 35.

[24] This report was transmitted to the United States Senate in January, 1934, in response to Senate Resolution No. 220 asking for the facts.

[25] Include mining, manufacturing, construction, steam railroads, Pullman transportation, railway express, and water transportation.

and should not be interpreted as an average payment made to each earner on the payroll." It is well known that a considerable proportion of wage-earners are and have been working on part time. Furthermore, since the decline in the average wage was much more drastic than that in the average salary, the purchasing power of the average wage in the selected industries did *not* remain proportionate to the fall in living costs but rather declined in 1930 and 1931 and fell sharply in 1932. The report infers that in other industries which suffered from the depression the average wage was cut more than the average salary. It adds: "The depression seems to have put its greatest burden upon those who, in view of their already low position on the economic scale, could least afford to lose." [26]

Not only are wages and family incomes curtailed by reason of economic depressions, but unemployment is also increased by technological advancement. As Polakov convincingly shows, the time-saving machines of the nineteeth century have become the labor-saving machines of the twentieth; power has been substituted for human labor. This would have meant a continuously mounting army of unemployed had not workers been absorbed to some extent by expanded industries and by the growth of services, such as laundries, filling stations, and cleaning and dyeing plants. But this absorption of labor ceased in 1930 and at no time did it mean a significant *increase* in employment relative to population but only a "shift in occupation." Between 1910 and 1930 the increase in number of productive workers was 13.2 per cent, but the ratio of the gainfully employed to the total population showed a gain of only 0.9 per cent.[27] A further fact merits consideration. The 1930 census figures of the number of employed workers did not reveal how many listed as employed were working on part time. Had this distinction been made, the inference seems justified that the ratio of the *fully employed* workers to the total population in 1930 would show not a small gain but a distinct loss. This inference receives support from the fact that if employment in 1926 be taken as the base (100 per cent) a decline follows to 93.8 in 1928 and 97.5 in 1929.[28]

But this is not the whole story. Polakov declares that the productivity of our present power industries could be increased forty times by using to the utmost our present technological and managerial means.[29] If this full utilization should occur, it would mean, according to Polakov, that instead of the 25,000,000 workers employed in industry in 1929 the demand for goods that existed in that year could be completely satisfied by employment of only 625,000 workers. What, then, he asks, shall be done with the 24,375,000 workers if and when industry comes to find them superfluous? [30] It can hardly be doubted that this crucial problem of unemployment due to technological improvements will become urgent in the next few years, even if the United States succeeds in lifting itself from the present slough of depression into moderate prosperity.

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[26] *National Income, 1929–32* (United States Government Printing Office, Washington, 1934), pp. 14–20.

[27] Polakov, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

[28] Cf. Tugwell and Hill, *Our Economic Society and Its Problems*, p. 80.

Clearly it should not be assumed that unemployment, low wages, and poverty are conditions existing only in periods of economic depression. "Unemployment," says Robert Bruere, "is a permanent feature of modern industrial life everywhere." In support of his statement he cites the figures given by the Federal Census of Manufactures in 1910. These show that of "37,194 establishments, only forty per cent were in operation for the full year; nineteen per cent lost a month or more, and *eight per cent were shut down half the time.*" [31] The figures issued by the Biennial Census of Manufactures for the year 1923 show that in the minimum month of employment (January) there were 8,421,317 workers employed as compared with 8,910,742 employed in the maximum month (September). This means, of course, that there were 489,425 workers unemployed in January who were at work in September. And these figures do not include the body of irregularly employed or permanently unemployed laborers.

Not only are shutdowns a common feature of modern industry, but much employment is by its very nature seasonal. The building, painting, and plumbing trades are all more or less seasonal, hence the high wages demanded by skilled workers in those industries. Industrial uncertainty is, moreover, greatly aggravated by strikes, called by the representatives of organized labor with or without due justification. Add to these ever-present possibilities of a curtailment of family income the further one of wage decreases, which are declared whenever employers face a diminution in the financial returns of the industry that may threaten dividend payments, and the uncertainties surrounding the worker are seen to be grave realities.

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[29] In their study of *America's Capacity to Consume* already cited (p. 127), Leven, Moulton, and Warburton state that, *with existing methods,* the potential production of goods *and services* in 1929 exceeded actual production by 20 per cent.

[30] *The Power Age,* p. 136.

[31] Bruere, "Reanchoring the Home," *Harper's Magazine,* Vol. 124, pp. 920–921 (May, 1912).

The income of the laboring man is rendered still further precarious by the imminence of industrial accidents and occupational diseases. The number and extent of injuries suffered by workers over the length and breadth of the land are grim facts that State governments are only beginning to face. In the matter of legislation providing accident insurance for injured laborers the United States lags far behind European nations. Even if the worker escapes serious injury to life and limb, he still is threatened by occupational diseases. In a lengthy report on "Industrial Hygiene" prepared by Dr. Kober for the United States Bureau of Labor, a large number of occupations inimical to health are listed. Among these are the trades of the bleachers, brass-founders, compositors, coopersmiths, electrotypers, gas workers, white lead workers, match workers, potters, file-makers, and operatives in rubber factories. Dr. Kober's investigations show that workers in employments involving dust—metallic, mineral, animal, or vegetable—have a markedly high proportion of sufferers from tuberculosis and pneumonia; while the morbidity and mortality in all occupations in which white lead is employed are notoriously high. With regard to the morbidity of the laboring class as a whole, statistics "indicate that persons habitually engaged in hard work are most frequently subject to disease and present a higher mortality than persons more favorably situated, and this is especially true of factory employees, because their work is generally more monotonous, fatiguing, and performed under less favorable surroundings, and they are too often also badly nourished and badly housed."

Impact of Industry upon Family Life.

What is the effect upon families of these conditions, always present in our industrialized society, but gravely aggravated by six years of the most serious economic breakdown in world history? It would be a temperate statement to declare that in the last few years millions of families of the wage-earning group have run the entire gamut of human deprivation, suffering, humiliation, and despair. The poverty of some hundreds of thousands in prosperous times has become the poverty of millions of self-respecting families formerly independent. A class called "the new poor" has appeared in our society to whom the idea of being dependent on a welfare agency is abhorrent. And yet after a year or two of such dependence family pride sometimes breaks down and humiliation yields to indifference. In some cases a bitter sense of loss and social injustice sets up serious mental conflicts. During the current economic slump the savings of heads of families have vanished; the homes on which they were hopefully making payments have been heavily mortgaged and in many instances entirely lost; families have crowded into small apartments with generous parents or friends; a mountain of debts has been piled up which cannot be paid off except at the price of many years of labor. Destitution, with the loss of furniture, food, and even a roof over the family heads, stares every member in the face. Quarrels break out in families heretofore harmonious and in the words of a Philadelphia youth of nineteen whose family fell on evil days: "We begin to lose faith in ourselves. Family life becomes a chaotic mass. We do not trust each other. We quarrel and argue about insignificant matters. . . . We become so heated in our arguments that we begin to have fist fights, throwing chairs and utensils about. . . . This finally ends in something more tragic." When the family at last becomes utterly destitute, with no more money obtainable and all the furnishings sold, the members "become a down-hearted brooding group of famished bodies, too ill to care what becomes of us, too tired and fatigued to keep on living." [32]

The full effects of the present economic collapse upon the health of families are not yet apparent. Yet, despite the surprisingly low morbidity and mortality statistics of the last five years, physicians and social workers testify that the health of both adults and children has been undermined by malnutrition and the carking anxiety that accompanies a sense of economic insecurity. As Williams has truly said: "The effect of malnutrition usually is not death of mother or child but a weakened mother and an unhealthy child." He quotes from a letter received from a State department of health in answer to inquiries made in the winter of 1931–1932 regarding the effect of the depression on the health of expectant mothers. "It has been apparent for some months past that women coming to the pre-natal consultations conducted by this Division (Division of Maternity, Infancy and Child Hygiene) are showing definitely the effects of insufficient or improper diet. In some cases it was reported that families had been living for weeks on potatoes, in which case they would not have fallen particularly low in weight but showed other evidences of improper nourishment. They all report husbands and other members of the family out of work and are depressed and hopeless."[33] Williams also comments on the "tottering morale" and "shaken nerves" of unemployed members of families, and on the spread of juvenile delinquency, growing in part out of family need, and in part out of a situation in which boys out of work "roam the streets and water-fronts looking for adventure."[34] Perhaps the most disastrous aftermath of the national economic breakdown will prove to be the physical and moral deterioration of youth, not alone among the most impoverished groups, but also in the educated group of moderate income. These youths—young men and women—face a world in ferment, which offers them little hope of finding work, of attaining financial independence, of looking forward to the normal experiences of courtship, marriage, and founding a home. Dull hopelessness, an enfeebling sense of inadequacy, unprofitable idleness, and bitter rebellion have already driven many youths of both sexes into sexual license, delinquency, and crime.

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[32] From a paper written on the title "What Unemployment Has Meant to My Family." In M. Elderton, ed., *Case Studies of Unemployment* (University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1931), p. 386.

Bad Housing.

One inevitable effect of low wages and unemployment is the segregation of the working class in ugly slums in which insanitary tenement houses rub elbows with each other, leaving few open spaces for the admission of light and air. The fundamental importance of decent housing conditions to the physical and moral health of every individual—old and young—seems obvious enough and has been pointed out again and again by investigators in this field. Edith Elmer Wood, well-known housing authority, writes: "No nation can rise higher than the level of its homes. Whether we approach the subject from the point of view of health, morals, child conservation, industrial efficiency, Americanization, or good citizenship, the housing problem is fundamental."[35]

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[33] J. M. Williams, *Human Aspects of Unemployment and Relief* (The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1933), p. 49.

[34] *Ibid.*, Chs. VI–VIII.

More than a generation ago Germany and Belgium attacked the crucial problem of securing decent homes for their wage-earners, and England has made notable advances toward the solution of this problem. Nothing, however, was done in this country until the opening of the twentieth century, when numerous surveys of bad housing conditions were made in New York, Washington, Chicago, Boston, Pittsburgh, and other industrial centers. The New York City Tenement House Commission was first in the field in 1900, and its admirable report led to the much-needed Tenement House Law of 1901. Needless to say, all the surveys revealed unspeakably menacing and degrading conditions in those tenements occupied by the lowest-paid class of workers. Dr. Wood sums them up as follows:

> Roughly stated, one-third of the people of the United States are living under subnormal housing conditions, conditions which fall below the minimum standard we shall presently describe, and about a tenth are living under conditions which are an acute menace to health, morals and family life, conditions which tend to produce degenerative changes in those subject to them. . . . The same conditions meet us everywhere—lot overcrowding and room overcrowding, dark rooms and inadequately lighted rooms, lack of water, lack of sanitary conveniences, dilapidation, excessive fire risks, basement and cellar dwellings.[36]

The district nurse and the social worker know only too well that tuberculosis rages in basement dwellings and dark, airless rooms. And the danger of contagion that threatens every family living under such conditions is multiplied by gross overcrowding. When the rent cannot be paid without taking in lodgers, lodgers are received into the tenements of families already indecently huddled together. Byington found an appalling situation of this kind in Homestead in 1910. In this steel city a study was made of twenty-one of the wretched courts of the Second Ward, where many of the Slavic workers were segregated. Among 239 families, 102 were taking in lodgers and in these latter families the average number of persons to a room was four. Fifty-one families were found each living in one room; and two-room tenements were not rarely occupied by a man, wife, two children, and two to three lodgers![37] Such conditions are directly responsible for sexual immorality, intemperance, and juvenile delinquency. And, as one writer satirically points out, we go on building hospitals, asylums, and reformatories!

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[35] *The Housing of the Unskilled Wage Earner* (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1919), p. 1.

[36] *Ibid.*, pp. 7, 8.

Particularly harmful are such home conditions in their effects upon little children. Dr. Wood quotes Luther Burbank as saying: "All animal life is sensitive to environment, but of all living things the child is most sensitive. The child absorbs environment."[38] So far as slum tenement children are concerned, it is the merest blind sentimentality to go on glorifying "the influence of the home." These dark, ill-smelling dwellings, "pestilential in winter and purgatorial in summer," are the worst possible environment for the growth of wholesome family life. Children and youth alike leave them as often as possible for the street, the movie, and the dance hall, and parents are powerless to hold them. Byington says that Homestead mothers, knowing the dangers of the streets and of many commercialized amusements, "make a heroic and often pathetic effort to keep the home attractive enough to offset these temptations"; but their endeavors would in most instances seem doomed to failure from the start.

Not only the morals, but the vitality and the growth of children are menaced by the conditions prevailing in our most overcrowded tenements. Aronovici cites the results obtained by Dr. Mackenzie, of the Scottish Education Department, who in 1905–1906 made a physical examination of 72,857 school children between the ages of five and eighteen. He found that Scotch boys living in one-room homes were on the average 11.7 pounds lighter in weight and 4.7 inches shorter than boys from four-room houses; and girls from one-room homes were 14 pounds lighter and 5.3 inches shorter than girls from four-room homes.[39] But stunted growth is not all. The infant mortality rate in the most crowded tenements is cruelly high. Byington found that in the wretched dwellings of Homestead's Second Ward the child death rate was double that in other wards.[40] Poverty saps the vitality of both mother and infant; and if the child grows to adult age, he is unable to bear the strain of life. Low in vigor, he becomes the ready prey of occupational diseases and finds it hard to make a living that will ensure to his children the health and energy which he has never enjoyed. So the vicious circle is repeated.

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[37] "The Family in a Typical Mill Town," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XIV (1910), p. 654.

[38] Wood, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

[39] Carol Aronovici, *Housing and the Housing Problem* (A. C. McClurg & Co., Chicago, 1920), pp. 12–13.

[40] *Ibid.*, p. 654. See also the studies made by the United States Children's Bureau on "Infant Mortality." *Bureau Publications*, Nos. 6, 9, 68, 112.

The conditions described above existed prior to the World War. During and for several years after that conflict, an acute housing shortage prevailed in many congested industrial centers of the United States and Europe which greatly aggravated the bad conditions already existing. Nor have housing conditions materially improved in this country during the last fifteen years. Most of the new houses erected in the United States since 1919 have been built for the middle and prosperous classes who could afford one-family dwellings. Slightly less than 2 per cent of the building permits issued in 1923 were granted for "one-family and two-family dwellings with shops" and "multi-family apartments with shops" because such dwellings do not yield a high return on the capital invested.[41] When new detached homes and apartment houses are built for the relatively well-to-do classes, these buildings are promptly filled by families who have vacated inferior dwellings. It is these single or two-family houses, often run-down and sometimes lacking in modern conveniences, that are turned into tenements and occupied by laborers—the better ones by skilled workers, the less desirable by low-paid labor. According to the housing report cited above, of all families provided for by new housing in 1921, 58.3 per cent were furnished with one-family dwellings, 2.3 per cent with one-family and two-family dwellings with shops, and 1.3 per cent with multi-family apartments with shops. In 1923 conditions were little better. Of all the families provided with new housing in the United States, 45.8 per cent were furnished with one-family dwellings costing $871,704,763, while 2.3 per cent were furnished with multi-family apartments with shops at a cost of $50,315,146.[42]

Confronted before and after the World War with a housing situation no whit better than that in the United States, several countries of Europe have attacked this problem with far-sighted intelligence and with a sense of national responsibility which puts the United States to shame. England was first in the field by beginning the work of slum clearance as early as 1889, when forty-two acres of London slums were cleared. Since the World War the London County Council has provided new dwellings for more than 100,000 persons and has cleaned out twenty-three dirty and unhealthful areas comprising ninety-eight acres.[43]

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[41] See "The Housing Situation in the United States," *Report of the International Labor Office* (Geneva, 1925), pp. 22, 23.

[42] *Ibid.*, p. 23.

Unfortunately, the houses erected in England (1,177,863 in number) between the Armistice and March, 1934, have been for the most part too high-priced to meet the needs of workers. Therefore, the government enacted the Housing Act of 1930 restricting the activities of local authorities in the housing field to slum-clearance and rehousing and placing the responsibility for such programs squarely upon the shoulders of these authorities. According to Mary Simkhovitch,[44] the English "government's machinery for slum-clearance and rehousing programs is geared to abolish the slum evil in the next five years. . . . The schedule provides for the demolition of 53,200 houses and the erection of 57,000, annually for the next five years. . . . Realizing the necessity for adequate subsidies to provide low-rental homes, the government increased its contributions for housing from £11,875,806 in 1930–31 to £13,645,000 in 1933–34. To clear away the 200,000 houses and to provide the necessary new ones in five years as pledged, the government, according to the Minister of Health, will be required to spend £95,000,000." [45] (About $475,000,000.)

Perhaps Holland has accomplished more than any other European state in the great work of housing its people. This small country began its attack on bad housing in 1901, when it adopted a policy of loaning money to cities for the erection of sanitary dwellings in slum areas. Public utilities and coöperative societies might also receive loans from the national treasury if the organizations were guaranteed by municipal governments. The loans, which carry a low rate of interest, are made *up to 100 per cent of the building costs*. In the city of Amsterdam, where more than 10 per cent of the population of Holland lives, building societies erected homes for 4,573 families between 1909 and 1917. A year later the Dutch government began making outright subsidies for housing, and as a result in the decade between 1918 and 1928 private societies built 11,000 new dwellings. The city itself entered the housing field in 1919 in a fine effort to meet a genuine housing emergency; and during the next decade, despite grave difficulties owing to the shifting sands and soft mud of the terrain, the city has built model tenements and cottages in garden suburbs which house 7,000 families. Since the World War more than 15,000 homes for workers have been provided in Amsterdam alone.

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[43] See Louis H. Pink, *The New Day in Housing* (The John Day Company, New York, 1928), p. 15.

[44] Chairman of the National Public Housing Conference of America.

[45] "British Action in Slum Clearance," *The New Republic,* Sept. 26, 1934.

Germany also vigorously attacked her emergency housing problem after the War. At first one-family houses were built in the suburbs of German cities by building societies which received government aid. Since 1924, however, multi-family houses and apartments are the rule. New tenements for workers, housing groups of families from four to twelve in number, have been erected in large numbers in the suburbs of German cities. In Cologne since 1919 over 22,000 houses have been built, two thirds of them by building societies with municipal aid.

Perhaps the most interesting housing campaign in Europe was carried on in the socialist city of Vienna prior to the ruthless suppression of the Socialist Party by Dollfuss early in 1934. This municipality by its own efforts has erected the finest apartments for its workers of any city in the world. Believing that the capital for these workers' homes should be provided by citizens with means, through a drastic system of taxation, the municipal government of Vienna housed over 30,000 workers' families in model apartments between 1925 and 1928. Since the government *expected no return on the invested capital,* it was able to lease these homes to impoverished workers for a nominal rent, covering the cost of upkeep, and demanding only 2 per cent of the average worker's income. The tenements cover only half the land, allowing ample space for gardens, playgrounds, and even, in some cases, a swimming pool.[46]

What has America accomplished in the battle against the slums? The reply may be given in two words—almost nothing. Relying up to very recent times upon private initiative and limited dividend companies, the United States has a meager record of accomplishments in housing since the World War. A few model apartments were erected several years ago in the metropolitan area of New York through the efforts of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company. But with the exception of the Metropolitan's project on Long Island the tenements rent for from $12 to $15 a room monthly—a rental far too high for the majority of workers. Certain garden-city projects have also been carried out, such as the model settlements at Sunnyside, Long Island, and Radburn, New Jersey; but these homes were designed for salaried workers of moderate income.

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[46] The author is indebted for much of the above account to Louis H. Pink's *The New Day in Housing* (The John Day Company, New York, 1928), Chs. III–VIII.

In 1926, when it became apparent that private initiative could not be counted upon to build homes for the poor, New York State enacted its State Housing Law. The law provides a form of partnership between the State, the city, and private enterprise. Plans for slum clearance and rehousing are carried out by private enterprise through the limited dividend corporation, while the State and city provide financial encouragement and some degree of regulation. New York State has coöperated by establishing the State Board of Housing, which oversees and approves all slum-clearance projects. The Housing Law also provides *freedom from State taxes* for all new housing in slum areas erected by limited dividend companies whose plans have the approval of the State Board, and further grants the *power of condemning land* to public limited-dividend corporations. No such company can be incorporated or carry on any housing enterprise without the consent of the State Housing Board, which is empowered to supervise and regulate limited-dividend companies in the interest of tenants and stockholders. Cities in New York State have been requested to imitate State action by exempting from municipal taxation housing erected by approved housing companies. New York City enacted such an ordinance in 1927. Under the provisions of the State Housing Law eleven model tenements have been erected, such as the large housing project of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Corporation in the Bronx, the model apartment house at Grand and Chrystie Streets in lower New York, and the Brooklyn Garden Apartment in that borough. But it has become abundantly clear that the stupendous task of clearing the slums of our cities cannot be left to limited-dividend companies, even when given State aid and encouragement. A few such companies have been organized and a few model tenements erected,[47] but hardly a dent has been made in the mountainous undertaking of rehousing American workers in decent homes.

During the past two years the public mind in our country has been educated through the efforts of the National Public Housing Conference [48] and other organizations, as well as by the pronouncements and active efforts of the federal government, to a belief that slum-clearance and the rehousing of low-income families is a *public responsibility*—a task which should be planned and executed by public authorities. In the great work of public housing New York State has again shown the way. In the winter of 1933 a bill was introduced into the State legislature providing for Municipal Housing Authorities in the cities of the State. This first public housing bill was enacted into law in 1934, with the vigorous support of the governor and the mayor of New York City. Under the leadership of Mayor La Guardia a Municipal Housing Authority has been organized in New York City and a vigorous attack on problems of slum-removal and model housing has begun. New York's public housing bill has furnished suggestions for similar legislation in the eight or nine States which have provided for municipal housing authorities. The city of Detroit has a well-developed plan for slum-clearance and model housing to be financed largely by the federal government. Nine blocks of slum homes will be replaced by model apartments in which rents will average a little over six dollars per room monthly, in contrast with a rental of twelve dollars per room or more charged by most limited-dividend companies. Excellent city housing plans are also under way in Milwaukee and Los Angeles.

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[47] An excellent example is the housing project recently completed at Woodside, Long Island, where a unit of ten houses has been opened. The rooms rent for $11 per month.

Recently the mayor of New York appointed a special housing commissioner to investigate the many-sided problem of municipal housing. In his excellent report to the mayor the commissioner, Mr. Nathan Straus, made the following vigorous statements and recommendations:

> It is a fact that 1,500,000 people in this city are forced to live in crime-fostering and disease-breeding tenements. It is a fact that New York City still has buildings built in 1879 which contain more than 250,000 rooms without windows to the outer air. It is a fact that about one-third of the families of New York City have incomes of less than $1,500 a year.
>
> These are the conditions which necessitate a governmental low-cost housing program. No private builder in New York City can build to meet the rental pocketbooks of the 500,000 families which now live in slums and must be rehoused. These families can afford only rents in the neighborhood of $20 per month.

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[48] A private organization in New York City.

> A program of low cost housing construction by cities with Federal Government aid will be competition to private industry only so far as private industry continues to maintain slum tenements. Is that not, however, their very object?
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> Therefore, I recommend that the inauguration of the New York City rehousing program be not delayed out of consideration for the man who owns and maintains a slum tenement to house human beings for his own profit, but that the policy be declared instead that it is the determination of the city government to compel the destruction of slums and to rehouse slum-dwellers in new government housing projects, at certain definite rates and in certain specified areas. The rights of the taxpayers and the protection of the health of the people of the city are paramount to the rights of a few owners of the slums.[49]

The Federal Government has been actively concerned with the problem of housing since the inauguration of the present administration in March, 1933. President Roosevelt in no uncertain terms has proclaimed his interest in clearance of the slums as inimical to public health and morals. He is also interested in a national program for rehousing American workers as a means of putting thousands of unemployed laborers to work. The Secretary of the Interior and his aides have organized a Housing Division under the Public Works Administration whose special task it will be to use federal funds for the purchase of land, for slum-clearance, and for low-cost housing projects throughout the country. It is the plan of the Housing Division to construct under federal auspices homes for the lowest-income groups which will rent for six dollars per room monthly—or even less. On November 8, 1935, it was announced from Washington that the Public Works Administration has purchased or put under option land for fifty housing projects in thirty-five cities.[50] Unfortunately the whole movement has slowed down in recent months.

At last, then, municipal, State, and federal authorities in these United States are cautiously becoming committed to the policy of public housing as the only sure means of removing dark, dingy, vermin-infested slum houses and replacing them with homes, in the city or in suburban districts, supplied with ample light, air, and play-space. It may be that in the years to come America will take its place beside certain European countries dedicated to the total removal of slum areas as a menace to the family and to civilization.

[49] *New York Times,* October 21, 1935.
[50] *Ibid.,* Nov. 9, 1935.

The Labor of Mothers and Children.

When, because of low wages, unemployment, or sickness, the father is unable to earn even a minimum living wage, the mother and sometimes the children of school age are driven out of the home to seek work. This is a fact with which we are so familiar that it is accepted as a matter of course. But the consequences that follow from the all-day employment of women with young children are by no means fully understood or appreciated. Yet a week's visiting in the tenement districts would drive home to our minds the deplorable results that sometimes ensue from this practice. Obviously, if the mother is needed at home to prepare food for the family, to wash, mend, clean, and care for babies or toddling children, these essential tasks are very largely neglected if she is forced to work in factory or shop from eight to ten hours. To be sure many women in these circumstances make a heroic effort to carry on two jobs. They buy cooked food at the delicatessen shop; they bravely attack the washing or cleaning after a weary day's work; they put an old mother or aunt in charge of the children, if they are fortunate enough to have such a relative available. If not, the older girl or boy is kept home from school to watch the babies; or the mother turns over part of her meager wages into a fund to pay a neighbor to take care of several families of small children. Needless to say, home care and home training may suffer woefully under this régime. And the wife and mother not infrequently breaks down under the double strain, as the records of hospitals and charitable organizations all too clearly show.

Urban Life and the Family.

As we have seen, urban life is almost identical with industry, since where great industrial plants are established large towns and cities tend to grow up. Thousands of men and women flock to these centers for employment, and, in the absence of civic housing commissions empowered to furnish decent homes for these laborers, there follow as inevitable consequences dangerous overcrowding and insanitary slums. In cities, where density of population is greatest, morbidity and mortality tend to increase and infectious diseases spread most easily.

The unwholesome effects of tenement-house living in our slum districts might be mitigated if there were a sufficient number of parks and playgrounds to which tenement dwellers could resort without expense and loss of time. But here, again, city life tends to react unfavorably upon individuals and families. Although much has been done in many of our large industrial centers, notably in Chicago and more recently in New York, to bring air, space, and sunshine within the reach of every citizen, something remains to be done in not a few cities. In 1923 the United States Bureau of Education sought to discover, by means of a questionnaire sent to superintendents of schools, how many cities with a population of 30,000 or over were maintaining playgrounds, other than school playgrounds, out of public funds. Of the seventy cities having a population of 100,000 or more, fifty-eight replied, and fifty-two of this number stated that municipal playgrounds were maintained with public funds. Of the cities having a population between 30,000 and 100,000, 128 replied to the questionnaire, and of this number ninety-seven cities were maintaining municipal playgrounds. This means that at least 75 per cent of our largest cities and nearly 76 per cent of our smaller cities are awake to the need of play-spaces for children. Unfortunately, the Bureau did not investigate the adequacy of these playgrounds, in point of numbers and location, to meet the needs of all the children in our centers of population. The study did, however, bring out the facts that (1) a wide disparity of standards exists with respect to the amount of play-space necessary for each child and (2) marked differences exist in the provisions for a trained director of sports and games.[51]

Apparently city life has its effects upon births, marriages, and divorces. Although the urban birth rate in the United States [52] slightly exceeded that in small towns and rural districts in every year of the period 1915–1930, since that time the reverse has been true. In 1931 the birth rate in cities of 10,000 or over was 17.5; in the remainder of the national area (villages, small towns, and farming districts) the birth rate was 18.4. In 1932 the respective rates were 16.7 and 18.1.[53] Although it is probable that more women in rural areas are being delivered in city hospitals than ever before, a situation tending to raise the recorded birth rate in cities and to depress it in farming regions, yet, even so, the vigorously proclaimed superiority of rural districts in the

[51] J. F. Rogers, "Municipal and School Playgrounds and Their Management," *School Health Studies,* No. 6, 1924, pp. 5, 9. (U. S. Bureau of Education.)

[52] In cities of 10,000 population and over.

[53] *Census Report of 1932,* p. 5.

matter of births is tending to disappear. Unquestionably, the birth rate is steadily falling in both country and city. Yet it is still true that the number of children under five years of age per thousand women fifteen to forty-four years of age was markedly higher in 1930 in the rural farm population than in cities of over 100,000 population. The ratio was 545 to 293,[54] which means, of course, that there were not far from twice as many children under five years per women of child-bearing age on farms as in the larger cities.

In an address on "Population and Occupational Shifts" made in November, 1934, Dr. O. E. Baker of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics offered a significant and arresting suggestion. Pointing out that a wife and children are assets in farming areas where the family is the economic unit, but are largely economic liabilities in urban districts where industry is supreme, he inferred that "a civilization based primarily on an industrial and commercial system in which the individual is the economic unit is likely to develop a declining population as agriculture becomes relatively less important." If the steady decrease in population is to be stemmed, and civilization made permanent, he believes that society "must be based primarily on agriculture, or on some other culture in which the family is the economic unit." In his judgment, if a system of part-time farming associated with industrial and commercial employment does not accomplish the objective of at least a stationary population, "it will be slowly replaced, I believe, by an agricultural civilization in which many industries will be carried on within the home, as they were a century ago." Holding that a nation should not grow old, he adds: "How can a nation live long? By recognizing that the land is the foundation of the family, and that the family is the foundation of the State." [55]

Dr. Baker offers no plan by which our present civilization, strongly urban and industrial in character, may be succeeded by a society rooted in agriculture. Even at the risk of declining populations, it seems highly improbable that the peoples of advanced industrial nations will deliberately turn the hands of history's clock backwards and return to a simple civilization grounded in tillage of the soil.

The effect of urban life on marriage and divorce remains for brief consideration. Ogburn, using the census of 1920, has classified 170 cities according to the percentage of population engaged in manufacturing and also according to the percentage twenty-five years of age and over who were married. He finds that cities which have larger percentages engaged in manufacturing have larger percentages married. "This strongly points to the conclusion," he declares, "that manufacturing increases marriage perhaps through some such factor as wages or employment. . . ." Also the excess of males over females in manufacturing centers "has had its influence upon the increase of marriage." On the other hand, Ogburn's data show that where there is relatively a large employment of women in these industrial cities, there tend to be smaller percentages of women married, showing that the employment of women "tends slightly to delay marriage if not actually to discourage it." [56]

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[54] Graph of Bureau of Agricultural Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

[55] Published by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Agricultural Economics.

On the whole Ogburn's studies point to the conclusion that city life discourages marriage. Whereas 61.8 per cent of the rural population fifteen years of age and over were married in 1920, only 58.3 per cent of urban communities were married—a difference of 3.5 per cent. If the age distribution were the same for city and country (which it is not, since youth seeks the city), the disparity would be even greater—63.5 per cent of the age group fifteen and over married in the rural communities and only 57 per cent in the urban.[57]

As perhaps might be expected, the percentage of persons reported as divorced and living in cities is larger than the corresponding percentage living in rural districts. Ogburn has further found that the excess percentage of women divorced over men is greater for cities than for the country. Moreover, he concludes that cities that have larger percentages of young persons married also have larger percentages of divorced persons; and cities which have lower birth rates also have larger percentages divorced. This last condition may be in part explained by the well-known fact that children tend to hold married pairs together, whereas the highest ratio of divorces is found in childless families.[58]

By way of summary it may be said that urban life apparently tends somewhat to depress birth rates, to discourage marriage, and to increase divorce. What conditions in our cities are responsible for these outcomes is not yet clearly understood. But it may not be over rash to suggest that the economy of olden times, rooted in the land, thrived upon high marriage and birth rates and actively discouraged the break-up of families; whereas our urban industrial economy, competitive, individualistic, mobile, based upon money income instead of upon tillage, affords little of that powerful cement in ownership of land and homestead that held families together in the past and made of children welcome economic assets.

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[56] *American Marriage and Family Relationships* (Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1928), pp. 282–283.

[57] Ogburn, *op. cit.*, p. 448.

[58] *Ibid.*, pp. 450–451.

One important outcome of city dwelling remains to be considered. It can hardly be doubted that our "modern Babylons," with their huge populations, develop *mass habits* which insidiously undermine family life. It has been said that "men work in crowds, eat in crowds, seek recreation in crowds, and satisfy sex impulse in public brothels." Among the wealthy in our largest cities, such as New York, Chicago, Detroit, and San Francisco, meals are more and more often eaten in hotels and fashionable restaurants; dinners, bridge parties, dances, and even marriages take place in public resorts with ever increasing frequency. A great metropolitan daily published some time ago a racy article on the theme "Dining Out with Kitchenless New York." After describing the disappearance of the old-fashioned kitchen from the homes of all but the prosperous, the writer continues:

> How often do you hear in New York of big dinners, fashionable dinners, at private homes? Even the luncheons and suppers are given at public or semipublic places. A single New York hotel, aware of this demand, has forty-two private dining rooms and banquet halls, and others are hardly less amply supplied; in addition and supplementary to which there are scores of descendants of Delmonico's.[59]

Needless to say life *en masse* is even more general among the poor. In the ranks of the unskilled laborers, homes are places in which to snatch a hasty meal, to find a corner of bed or floor or table not preëmpted by family members or lodgers on which to sleep—and then to get away from it to the street, the factory, the cheap amusement place. Even the middle-class home in our largest cities is being profoundly affected by the trend toward public mass living and eating. To quote once more from the *Times* article:

> On every hand apartment houses and apartment hotels spring up with amazing speed, sometimes to amazing proportions. Old houses are being re-

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[59] *New York Times,* Magazine Section, January 25, 1925.

modeled by the thousand into small suites, and in them not even the kitchenette is to be found.

Here, in dwellings that once sheltered families of means, and probably of size, with a cook for each family and a minor tribe of servants, even "light housekeeping" is forbidden. The law requires expensive and unsightly fire-escapes front and back if there be more than one kitchen apparatus on the premises. The tenant is forbidden to enjoy so much as the modest comfort of an electric toaster. But the real estate agent and the "superintendent," meaning the janitor, seldom incline to take the rule too seriously. It is tacitly understood that breakfast and perhaps lunch will be prepared at home. Everybody does it. The economies effected by enduring the cramped quarters of a suite would be dissipated were it necessary to take all the meals at a restaurant. And so New York, the haven of the bootlegger, is coming to be also the haven of the "cooklegger."

Canned food and the delicatessen do the rest. The living room is also the dining room and the kitchenette. But as a rule the "familette" goes out to dinner, and as a consequence there has come into existence here a kind of restaurant specially dedicated to the kitchenless, an asylum for those who will never know the kind of pie mother used to make.

It is an institution indigenous to New York, and apparently peculiar to it. Other cities have their counterparts of Sherry's and Pierre's, their likenesses to the chain restaurants which besprinkle this island; and everywhere will be found lunch rooms for the business man of all degrees, from the clerk to the corporation executive; but where else will be found places calculated solely to catch the dinner trade of the kitchenless middle-class family? Where but in New York?

So uptown, anywhere uptown from the West Sixties to the Hundreds, this singular establishment is to be found on every hand. Enter between 6 and 7 of an evening, scan the menu and observe the guests. From the bill of fare you will find that a table d'hôte dinner may be had for 85 cents or $1, and that a meal may be ordered à la carte within the bounds of middle-class Manhattan salaries. You must remember that most New Yorkers pay half their income for rent nowadays, instead of the good old domestic-science maximum of one-fourth. The rapacious landlord takes this toll despite the abolition of the kitchen.

Enter now the children of Father Knickerbocker—a floor manager in a department store, his idle and discontented wife; their daughter, who is a filing clerk in a downtown warren of concrete and steel; and their son, from whose chaff a dispirited Columbia Faculty is trying to winnow a grain of usefulness. They scan the bill of fare with varying degrees of intensity or distaste, and eat amid a monosyllabic silence. The girl pays her own check.

The four are a slice of that vast people, New York's middle class. It was said once that the English were like a keg of their own ale, mostly froth at the top and dregs at the bottom, but thoroughly sound in the middle. The population of this town is more like a bottle of fermented buttermilk, an

> artificial product throughout but advertised as healthful. If the kitchenette spreads over the country, as the Playgrounds and Recreation folk fear it will, and then tends to vanish as it is doing here, what is to be the fate of a nation founded upon the family?

What will be the psychological and social outcomes of such continuous mass living? asks the student of social conditions. What the effect upon marriage and the family? The most resolute advocate of the *status quo* will hardly maintain that the intimate family associations of bygone times can be so metamorphosed in our huge cities without profoundly affecting the family institution. Unquestionably the rising generation is destined to see a further transformation of family life brought about, in part, by the widespread development of mass habits of living and thinking in congested centers of population. Nor can it be asserted too casually that such changes will prove either disastrous or beneficial. Neither the dark prophecies of the reactionary nor the easy optimism of the advocates of social change should determine the judgment of intelligent men and women with regard to this many-sided question. We need not only more concrete evidence concerning the social causes of family change, but we need also to develop still further an objective attitude toward the study of family problems. Whether the family of the future succeeds or fails depends in no small measure upon a far more general spread of exact knowledge with respect to the social conditions which impede its functioning.

TOPICS FOR REPORTS

1. Is America's Productive Capacity Sufficient to Furnish a Comfortable Income for Every Family?
    - Harold Loeb and Associates, *The Chart of Plenty* (Viking Press, New York, 1935), Entire.
    - E. G. Nourse and Associates, *America's Capacity to Produce* (The Brookings Institution, Washington, 1934), Entire.
    - Stuart Chase, *The Economy of Abundance* (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1934), Chs. XII–XIV, XVIII–XXI.
2. The Distribution of Income among Families.
    - M. Leven, H. G. Moulton, and C. Warburton, *America's Capacity to Consume* (Brookings Institution, Washington, 1934), Chs. V–XI.
    - Lewis Corey, *The Decline of American Capitalism* (Covici-Friede, Inc., New York, 1934), pp. 305–368.

3. Problems of Modern Housing.
    Catherine Bauer, *Modern Housing* (Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1934), pp. 119–173; 237–255.
    Edith Elmer Wood, *Recent Trends in American Housing* (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1931), Chs. X–XV.
4. The Human and Economic Costs of Unemployment.
    Paul H. Douglas, and Aaron Director, *The Problem of Unemployment* (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1931), Chs. V–XIV.
    James Williams, *Human Aspects of Unemployment* (University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1933), Chs. I–VIII.
5. Our Social Organization in its Effects on Urban and Rural Families.
    John L. Gillin, *Social Pathology* (The Century Company, New York, 1933), Chs. XXII, XXIII, XXVI.

CHAPTER IX

WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS

Women in Gainful Employment.

AMONG the many economic and social changes that mark the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries none is more arresting to the student of social history or more far-reaching in its effects, than the influx of women into gainful occupations outside the home. It is a commonplace to say that women have followed their ancient employments of food preparation, weaving, garment making, nursing, and teaching into the factory, the hospital, and the school—a commonplace so trite that we may easily overlook the enormous import of the facts. Beginning in the late eighteenth century, there has been a steady infiltration of women into paid employments, until, in the third decade of the twentieth century, the body of women in gainful work had swelled to a mighty army in Germany, France, Great Britain, and America.

In the United States the number of women ten years of age and over who were gainfully occupied in 1930 is reported in the census as 10,752,116. This number represents an increase of 2,203,605, or 25.7 per cent over the figures for 1920. The range of occupations which women are entering is a broadening one; of the 534 separate occupations classified in the last census, women are employed in all but 30.[1] Moreover, between 1920 and 1930 the proportional increase of employed women in all age-groups of twenty years and over was greater than their population increase. Very significant, also, is the report of the Women's Bureau that nearly 29 per cent of this huge body of women workers are married. Whereas the increase in employment of all women in the last census decade was over 25 per cent, the increase of employed married women was *nearly 60 per cent.*[2]

A bulletin published in 1922 by the Women's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor entitled "Family Status of Breadwinning

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[1] "Occupational Progress of Women, 1910 to 1930," *Bulletin of the Women's Bureau,* No. 134 (Washington, 1933), p. 38.

[2] "Activities Affecting Gainfully Employed Women," Women's Bureau, *News Letter* No. 92, November 1, 1932.

Women in Four Selected Cities" brings to light some facts that stimulate thought. In the four cities—Jacksonville, Wilkes-Barre, Hanover Township, Butte (Montana), and Passaic—the number of gainfully employed women (38,446) "constituted over 38 per cent of the entire female population fourteen years of age and over reported in these communities." In Jacksonville and Passaic, the percentages were respectively forty-five and forty-six. Of this army of employed women, approximately 55 per cent were or had been married; and of this group (21,000), *over 61 per cent were living with wage-earning husbands!* The Bulletin declares further that it "was not chiefly the childless women from whom the married breadwinners were recruited, for nearly 53 per cent of all the gainfully employed matrons had children, *and 40 per cent of these mothers had babies under five years.*" Nor were these women boarding; almost four fifths of the women breadwinners who were or had been married were maintaining homes. Nearly one half of this married group were engaged in gainful employments that took them outside their own homes.[3]

Since the above study was made, the influx of married women into gainful employment has increased at a high rate. In a survey made at the University of Pennsylvania in December, 1931, of the ousting of married women from jobs in Philadelphia, some striking facts were brought to light.[4] It was found that 55,000 married women were normally employed in Philadelphia; but of this number 11,000 had lost their jobs and another 10,000 were working part time. About 34,000 wives were working full time. In 9,960 of these families, or over 29 per cent, the only earnings were those of a married woman employed full time; in more than 5,000 other families one or more wage-earners were unemployed or on part time, making the earnings of the wife essential to the support of the family. Even with the aid of the wife's earnings, the struggle for bare subsistence was severe and in some families the members were fighting a losing battle. In the report of the survey the grim statement was made that "many of these families may already be below the level of minimum health and comfort. In many others, further reduction of the family income would immediately result in this condition."

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[3] "Family Status of Breadwinning Women in Four Selected Cities," *Bulletin of the Women's Bureau*, No. 23 (Washington, 1922), pp. 7–11.

[4] Philadelphia *Public Ledger*, December 10, 1931.

A report of the Civil Works Administration in Pennsylvania covering the period from November 15, 1933 to March 31, 1934, shows that over one fourth of an army of 13,329 women employed on work projects during this time were or had been married. These 13,329 women reported 17,387 dependents "for three-fourths of whom they were entirely responsible." The report declares that there is no doubt that the married women are carrying a large share of this burden.[5] Similarly, in a study covering over 10,000 women applicants for work at the Philadelphia Employment Office in 1933, over one fourth of the women were married. Two thirds of this group had dependents, one tenth had four or more dependents and 120 women actually had seven or more human beings to care for.

CAUSES OF ENTRY OF MARRIED WOMEN INTO GAINFUL OCCUPATIONS

The reasons why married women are leaving their age-old domestic employments for the factory, the shop, and the laundry are not far to seek. As Gwendolyn Hughes has pointed out:

> The mother's economic function in the home is encroached upon whenever a labor-saving device is adopted and whenever a factory product is substituted for a homemade article. The mother's contribution as a producer is reduced, while the demand of the family for a money income to buy the new commodity is correspondingly augmented.[6]

When the question "Why did you go back to work after you were married?" was put to 728 working mothers in Philadelphia, the largest group (29 per cent) answered, "My husband wasn't making enough." "My husband was dead," came next from 22 per cent. "My husband was sick," was the answer of 14 per cent. "He left me," was the reply of 13 per cent; while 11 per cent answered, "He wouldn't support me." Thus 89 per cent of these mothers were in real need of paid employment; only 11 per cent stated that they "would rather work." [7]

It is poverty that sends the mother from the home at seven o'clock in the morning, after she has washed and fed her children, to labor for a full or part-time day in order to supplement an income that no amount of "stretching" will make adequate to house, feed, and clothe the family. In England and America alike, careful investigations, carried on by trained workers, reveal the same causes. The British *Report of the Interdepartmental Committee on Physical Deterioration,* made to Parliament in 1904, states the reasons for the labor of English wage-earning mothers as being (1) death of the father or lack of employment, or inadequacy of the father's wage; (2) desertion by the father; (3) fear on the mother's part of loss of future work in the factory; (4) preference for factory over domestic work. The report adds that the "great majority of cases may be said to fall under one or other of the three sub-divisions in class (1)." [8] Among 120 cases of married women at work in Manchester, England, only six could be discovered in which the wife's wage-earning occupations were explained on the ground of preference. In Liverpool, the wives were reported to be at work because their husbands were "often casual labourers or drunkards." From Newcastle came the report that wives were wage-earners from necessity and not from choice. Their work was unattractive and often exhausting, "and not one of them seems to take the slightest pleasure in it." [9]

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[5] See typewritten pamphlet issued by the Women's Bureau, United States Department of Labor, October, 1934, entitled "Gainful Employment of Married Women," p. 14.

[6] "Mothers in Industry," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* May, 1929, p. 315.

[7] *Loc. cit.,* p. 317.

When we turn to America, similar conditions are found to prevail. Katherine Anthony's committee made a house-to-house study of 370 working mothers living in the middle west side district of New York which disclosed the following facts regarding their conjugal condition and the ability of their husbands to support the family: [10]

Group	*Conjugal Condition*	*Number*	*Per Cent*
I	Widows	125	33.8
II	Deserted wives	40	10.8
III	Separated wives	9	2.4
IV	Wives with incapacitated husbands	21	5.7
V	Wives with idle husbands	12	3.2
VI	Wives with husbands at work	163	44.1
	Total	370	100.0

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[8] P. 48.

[9] See Clementina Black (editor), *Married Women's Work* (George Bell & Sons, Ltd., London, 1915), pp. 161, 183, 203. By permission.

[10] Katherine Anthony, *Mothers Who Must Earn* (Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1914), p. 128.

It will be noted that considerably less than half of these women had husbands who contributed to the family support, and one third were widows. In every family where the husband was at work (163) he earned *less than $500 a year* and the earnings of the mother, or both mother and children, were essential to the support of the family. In ninety-six of these families the mother's earnings constituted 31 per cent of the family income; in sixty-seven families, 18.8 per cent.[11]

Commenting on these facts, Miss Anthony says:

> Too often we hear these women spoken of as if some perversity of instinct drove them to neglect their homes and go to work at the expense of their homes and children. It is for the sake of their children that they work, as mothers have done from time immemorial. The last penny of their earnings is absorbed by their homes. Visit one of them on Saturday night and see how they spend their wages. The money which the woman has earned on her hands and knees is spent in the Tenth Avenue stores and comes back into the home in the form of meat for Sunday's dinner and warm new clothing for the children. She buys little for herself but the bare necessities and even these she often foregoes.[12]

A study made in 1923 by the Women's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor of men and women wage-earners in the shoe industry in Manchester, New Hampshire, disclosed that in the great majority of families where married women were wage-earners, there were one or more dependents to be supported, and the women's wages were of real value. In 85 per cent of the 113 families investigated, where the wife was contributing to the family income, the husband's wages were $1,500 or less—in the great majority of cases less. In twenty-one families, the father earned less than $1,000. The investigators concluded their study of the contributions of these married women to the family income with the statement: "The fact that the inclusion of the wives' earnings raises the median of *per capita* earnings from $438, which is considerably below the median for all families, to $641, which is considerably above, leaves little doubt that the earnings of the married women in the majority of these cases were important in keeping up the standard of living for their families." [13]

Over the heads of most wage-earning wives and mothers hangs the fear that on any day the husband may come home with his overalls and bag and announce that he has been "fired." Unemployment is the bogy of the laboring class, especially the unskilled group. At any time the mother may find herself the sole support of the family. Miss Anthony vividly describes the curse of unemployment that visits the families of unskilled wage-earners in the middle west side district of New York:

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[11] Anthony, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 129.

[13] "The Share of Wage-Earning Women in Family Support," *Bulletin of the Women's Bureau*, No. 30 (Washington, 1923), p. 84.

> Sometimes it strikes a man without a word of warning. His wife sees him coming home in the middle of the morning and she knows what has happened even before he speaks. If she is apt at nothing else, she is quick to read the signs of this particular misfortune. Sometimes it strikes the family just when they have begun to entertain hopes and to make plans. The Gurneys had just moved into a four-room flat with rent at $16. They had formerly lived in a rear tenement, but Mr. Gurney, who was a cab driver, thought he was "in steady" for awhile. Then one day Mrs. Gurney, coming home in the afternoon, "saw his boots and his bandbox with his hat in the middle of the room." Mr. Gurney was nowhere about. He had gone out again after leaving these silent witnesses of misfortune. Mrs. Gurney threw herself on the bed and wept despairingly. The Gurneys were soon living in a basement.[14]

MOTHERHOOD AND WAGE-EARNING

A high proportion of married women in gainful employments are mothers; and, indeed, this fact, as we have seen, is a most powerful motive impelling them to work outside the home. A study made by the Women's Bureau in 1922 of nearly 10,000 women breadwinners in Passaic, New Jersey, showed that one half of them were or had been married, and nearly three fourths of the married or once-married group were mothers. Of these mothers, 1,800 were employed outside the home; and nearly 60 per cent had children under five years of age.[15] Similar conditions have been disclosed by the Children's Bureau in its studies of infant mortality in Manchester, New Hampshire, and New Bedford, Massachusetts. In the textile manufacturing city of Manchester, during a selected period—November 1, 1912, to October 31, 1913—1,643 mothers were investigated, all of whom had borne children during that year. Of these, 722, or 43.9 per cent, were gainfully employed within or outside the home after the birth of the child. In New Bedford, 2,662 similar cases were studied, in 1,242 of which (nearly 43 per cent) the mothers entered paid employment after childbirth.[16] These facts and figures could readily be reproduced in most of the great textile manufacturing centers of New England and the South.

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[14] Anthony, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

[15] "The Family Status of Breadwinning Women," *Bulletin of the Women's Bureau,* No. 23 (Washington, 1922), p. 4.

Effects of the Employment of Mothers.

What are the reactions of the employment of these breadwinning mothers upon the home and the nurture of children under school age? The consequences have been repeatedly summed up as harmful with respect to home management, child care and training, and infant mortality —not to mention the large number of abortions that are brought about through the necessity of the mother's employment. Let us examine each of these counts in the light of such facts as are well substantiated; for assuredly no progress will ever be made in solving these tangled social questions by the easy method of wholesale acceptance of unexamined opinions, especially when these opinions are more often than not grounded upon emotional prejudice. Since a high infant mortality rate is asserted to be directly attributable to the gainful employment of mothers and prospective mothers, let us begin our examination with this social condition.

Infant Mortality among Employed and Non-employed Mothers.

Owing to the indications in the federal census of inordinately high infant death rates in the textile and shoe manufacturing cities of New England, the Children's Bureau began a series of detailed investigations of the facts, the conditions, and the causes of this social phenomenon. As stated above, the studies in Manchester and New Bedford revealed that many hundreds of mothers with infants less than a year old were employed in these industrial centers, whereas a greater number of mothers were not engaged in gainful work. Such a condition made possible some interesting and highly significant comparisons of the infant mortality rate among wage-earning and non-wage-earning mothers. In Manchester, 1,643 mothers were included in the study, to all of whom children had been born in the selected year (1912–1913). Of these women, 864 were not gainfully employed during the year preceding the birth of the child and 776 were gainfully employed. The infant mortality rate [17] for the unemployed women was 133.9; for the breadwinning mothers, 199.2. Another striking fact brought out by the study was the smaller infant death rate among women engaged in wage-earning occupations *at home* before the birth of the child when compared with those going out into the factories to work. The rates follow: [18]

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[16] See *Bulletin of the Children's Bureau,* No. 20 (Manchester), p. 50; and No. 68, (New Bedford), p. 42.

Women Employed at Home		Women Working away from Home	
Type of Work	*Infant Mortality Rate*	*Type of Work*	*Infant Mortality Rate*
Keeping lodgers	149.8	Textile mill	227.5
Other home work	153.8	Other factories	240.5

It will be readily noted that, although the women carrying on paid employments in their homes show a higher infant death rate than women not so employed, the rate of this group is conspicuously lower than that of the women factory operatives. Still-births were also less numerous among the home workers.

The study made three years later in New Bedford, Massachusetts, shows similar findings: [19]

	Live Births	*Infant Mortality Rate*
Mothers not gainfully employed prior to childbirth, 1,420	1,370	108.8
Mothers gainfully employed prior to childbirth, 1,242	1,217	154.5
Employed at home, 360	353	121.8
Employed away from home, 882	864	167.8

Employment of mothers shortly *after* the birth of the child also results in a high infant death rate. In Manchester, this rate was 220.9 for employed mothers, as compared with 122 for mothers not gainfully employed. In New Bedford, 475 mothers resumed work away from home who left infants under one year of age. "If the average infant mortality rate for the city for the remainder of the year had prevailed among them, a total of 29 deaths would have occurred; but actually 43 of these infants died. The ratio of 43 to 29 expresses the extra mortality among these infants of gainfully employed mothers." [20]

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[17] The infant mortality rate represents the number of infant deaths, during the first year of life, per 1,000 live births.

[18] "Infant Mortality: The Results of a Field Study in Manchester, New Hampshire," *Bureau Publications,* No. 20 (Washington, 1917), p. 50.

[19] "Infant Mortality: Results of a Field Study in New Bedford, Massachusetts," *Bureau Publications,* No. 68 (Washington, 1920), p. 42.

An important cause of the high infant mortality rates among wage-earning mothers appears to be the artificial feeding of the child. Breast-fed children showed a uniformly lower death rate in both Manchester and New Bedford. The younger the baby, the more marked the harmful effect of the mother's absence, both in depriving the infant of her care and in depriving it of breast milk. Of 119 babies in Manchester whose mothers began working away from home before the baby was four months old, thirty-three died before the end of the first year—a mortality rate of 277.3, as compared with the rate of 121.7 for the remainder of the group, namely 1,389 babies.[21] As might be expected, a much higher proportion of gainfully employed women resort to artificial feeding of infants than is true of non-wage-earning women. In New Bedford, 45.9 per cent of women gainfully employed away from home were feeding their babies artificially at the age of three months, as compared with 24.3 per cent of unemployed mothers. In Manchester 65.5 per cent of the babies of mothers employed away from home were artificially fed, as compared with 28.5 per cent of the babies of women not gainfully employed.

Not only is artificial feeding less beneficial to infants, when the mother has an ample supply of good milk, but it is rendered virulently harmful by the careless methods of preparation and sterilization used by ignorant and hurried mothers. If all the women included in these two studies had received careful instruction in the preparation of modified milk for their babies, the infant death rate from gastric and intestinal diseases would no doubt have fallen sharply. As evidence of the truth of this statement the following fact will serve. More native-born than foreign-born women in New Bedford used artificial feeding of their infants; but the infant mortality rate among the native-born group was considerably lower than among the ignorant Portuguese mothers who fed their babies artificially. "There are many different types of artificial feeding," writes Jessamine Whitney in the New Bedford report:

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[20] *Loc. cit.*, p. 44.

[21] "Infant Mortality: The Results of a Field Study in Manchester, New Hampshire," *Bureau Publications,* No. 20 (Washington, 1917), p. 53.

> . . . the mother who gives her baby modified milk in accordance with a physician's prescription, and who observes carefully all the rules for cleanliness and sterilization, is classed as giving artificial feeding as well as the mother who is ignorant of the necessity of providing pure, clean milk or one who gives her baby condensed milk, solid food, coffee or tea. The contrast is well illustrated in the following descriptions of the feeding of two infants both classed as artificially fed. When Baby A cried, his milk bottle was picked up from the dirty floor, partly filled with condensed milk from the can, then placed under the faucet and filled up with water. The nipple was also recovered from the floor and Baby A was fed. For Baby B the bottles were kept sterilized; the milk, the best obtainable, was modified in accordance with a physician's directions and the ingredients of the formula were carefully measured; the temperature was properly regulated. Baby B was fed at regular intervals; he was seen at least once a week by a doctor, and the milk formula was changed when necessary. Both these babies were "artificially fed." [22]

The fact that stands out clearly from the above excerpt is that artificial feeding *in itself* need not be harmful to babies. In New York City, for example, the sharp fall in the infant death rate in recent years is due not only to better prenatal care of mothers in maternity centers and by visiting nurses, but also to improved methods of artificial feeding due to the careful instruction given to mothers who are as ignorant as their own babes of the paramount importance of cleanliness, sterilization, and food formulas adapted to the child.

Even if it be granted that breast feeding of infants is, on the whole, superior to the best of artificial feeding, this need not constitute an insuperable barrier to the employment of nursing mothers. In France, where many married women are gainfully employed, the law of 1917 requires that "for one year after the birth of the child, nursing mothers shall be allowed one hour a day during hours of work for the purpose of feeding their infants." This hour is divided into two periods of thirty minutes each, one during the morning and one during the afternoon. "The mother shall always be allowed to nurse her infant on the premises." Nursing rooms must be set up in or near any establishment where more than 100 women over fifteen years of age are employed; and "the conditions as regards construction, hygiene and supervision" of these nursing rooms "shall be determined by public administrative regulations. . . ."

[22] "Infant Mortality," *Bureau Publications,* No. 68, p. 35.

In 1925 the Children's Bureau undertook another investigation of the causal factors in infant mortality in eight cities. The mortality rate for about 7,000 infants whose mothers had worked away from home was 176.1, as compared with 114.6 for those whose mothers worked at home and 98 for those whose mothers had not been gainfully employed. This tells the same tale as the earlier studies. But it is significant that the infant death rate in families with crowded home conditions (two or more persons per room) was two and one half times higher than in homes with less than one person per room. This points to poverty as a major cause of high infant mortality; only the low-income groups reveal conditions of housing congestion. In its summary of the economic factors in infant death rates the investigator concludes:

> The responsibility of low income for high infant death rates extended beyond the mortality directly associated with it, covering much of that associated with housing congestion and with the mother's employment.
>
> The study of the chain of causation connecting low income with high mortality showed the direct relation between lack of means and the care available both for the mother during pregnancy and confinement and for the baby during his first year. It suggested, therefore, that if adequate care had been available for the mothers and babies in the low-income groups the high mortality rates of the babies in these groups would not have been found.[23]

Some striking facts have emerged from studies of infant mortality rates in the group of gainfully employed mothers in England. In Manchester, England, the infant mortality rate was 267 per thousand in the cases where the mothers were not employed outside the home and 210 in cases where they were so employed.[24] The same condition was found to exist in Birmingham, where the infant death rate in 1910, in the case of mothers employed before or after confinement, was found to be 153 per 1,000 births; among mothers who remained at home it was 161 per 1,000 births.[25] Obviously some factors are at work determining infant mortality other than the gainful employment of mothers in factories. Dr. Ashby does not hesitate to declare that *the chief of these is "poverty* which, together with ignorance, perhaps, more than anything else dominates the situation." [26]

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[23] Robert R. Woodbury "Causal Factors in Infant Mortality," *Bureau Publications,* No. 142 (Washington, 1925), p. 164.

[24] Clementina Black (editor), *Married Women's Work,* p. 176.

[25] Dr. Hugh T. Ashby, *Infant Mortality* (Cambridge University Press, 1915), p. 68.

[26] *Ibid.,* p. 68. Italics mine.

These and other factors responsible for high infant death rates will be considered below; but the question of the causal relationship of the gainful employment of mothers to infant mortality should not be left without consideration of an important contributory fact. Mothers employed outside the home are carrying a dual job—a full day's work and the manifold duties of housekeeping and child care. No fair test of the effects on infant mortality of extra-domestic employment of mothers can possibly be made until this condition is eliminated. A mother tired out by an eight-hour or ten-hour day in a factory is in no condition to give careful, intelligent physical care to a six-months-old baby. But that is not to say that the baby would not flourish if it received that care in a neighborhood nursery at the hands of specialists in child-rearing. If mothers are forced out of the home by economic pressure to augment the family income, it would seem that more intelligent measures for meeting this situation could be devised than have yet been put into effect. One such measure (not the only one) would be to organize an adequate number of social agencies for the proper care of the children of employed mothers. At present many of these women do not know where to turn for help. It is only the fortunate woman who has an aging mother or mother-in-law with whom the child may be left. Others are obliged to leave the infant with a neighbor, whom they pay for a service often inefficiently performed. Still others rely on the older children, out of school hours, for the essential care, or on an unemployed husband. A few are forced to leave the baby with its food tied round its neck—and hope for the best! Such conditions are a comment on the backwardness of society in ameliorating the conditions which it creates. Humane feeling exists everywhere, but organized and effective social aid lags behind.

The employment of mothers up to the time of confinement is generally believed to be a harmful practice. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has on its statute books a law prohibiting the employment of a woman "knowingly" within two weeks before or four weeks after childbirth. Such laws are hard to enforce unless a matron is appointed in each factory to see that the provisions are complied with. In England, where no prohibition exists regarding employment *before* confinement, Dr. Ashby has given attention to the question of the effect upon the offspring of the mother's employment up to the day of confinement, especially where she works hard "and has only the bare necessaries in the way of food." He finds that such conditions affect the weight of the child adversely. Of 500 babies whose mothers worked up to the day of their birth, the average weight at birth was 3,010 grams. Of 500 babies whose mothers spent ten days in a pre-maternity home, the average weight was 3,290 grams. Of 500 infants whose mothers spent more than ten days in the home, the average weight was 3,366 grams.[27]

Influence of the Father's Earnings.

Reference has previously been made to the fact that the extra-domestic employment of mothers is by no means the only cause of high infant mortality rates. Obviously the social phenomenon of breadwinning mothers is clearly related to that of low-paid fathers. An interesting and suggestive graph is produced in the Manchester report on infant mortality which shows conclusively that the employment of mothers fell sharply as the wages of the fathers rose. When the fathers were earning *less than $450 a year,* then nearly 75 per cent of the mothers were forced into gainful employment. And there were 225 such cases in the selected families studied! When the men's wages had risen to from $540 to $649, the percentage of mothers employed had sunk to fifty-five. In the group in which the fathers were earning $1,050 and over, only 10 per cent of the mothers were breadwinners. This situation tells its own tale.[28]

In New Bedford conditions were very similar. A father's wage below $450 meant that over 60 per cent of the wives and mothers entered gainful occupations. When the husband's earnings had mounted to $650, the percentage of mothers employed was cut almost in half. In the more adequately paid group, in which the father's wages were $1,050 or over, only slightly more than 15 per cent of mothers were gainfully employed.[29]

Grim and conclusive is the evidence as to the close correlation between a high infant mortality rate and low wages earned by fathers. In Manchester, when the wages of 225 fathers fell below $450, the infant mortality rate rose to the appalling figure of 242.9—almost one infant death to every four births! When the relatively high wage-group $850 to $1,049 is reached, the death rate of babies has fallen to 125—only slightly over half the first figure. In the highest wage-group of $1,250 or over, the infant mortality rate has dropped to the very low figure of 58.3—about one infant death to eighteen births.[30] New Bedford shows much the same conditions—an infant mortality rate of 201.9 when the father earns less than $450, and a rate of 59.9 when his earnings reach $1,250 or over.[31] In the lowest earning group one live-born baby in every five died before reaching its first birthday.

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[27] Ashby, *op. cit.,* p. 62.

[28] "Infant Mortality," *Bureau Publications,* No. 20, p. 49.

[29] "Infant Mortality," *Bureau Publications,* No. 68, p. 40.

[30] "Infant Mortality," *Bureau Publications,* No. 20, p. 45.

The low earnings of fathers react unfavorably upon the infant death rate in at least two ways: they are chiefly responsible for the high percentage of employed mothers, unable to give their infants proper care or breast feeding; and also they are responsible for the bad housing conditions and overcrowding that are the inevitable accompaniments of poverty. Again, the densest ignorance of the principles of child care and feeding is most commonly found in the lowest wage-groups; and the foreign-born mothers in this group, being often illiterate and unable to speak or understand English, can profit least by the printed pamphlets issued by boards of health and by the instructions of public health nurses. In Manchester, with its very high infant mortality rate in 1912 of 165, the rate for babies of literate mothers, exclusive of French connections, was 94.6. In the case of illiterate mothers the rate rose to 198.8. "Poverty nullifies in part the advantages of breast feeding," says the Manchester report, "while an ample income mitigates the disadvantages of artificial feeding. The reason for this may be, as before noted, that poverty usually means low standards and ignorance on the part of the mother, while ample income makes possible the attainment of higher standards, better medical attention, and greater knowledge in the care of the baby." [32]

So-called "immaturity" or inability to meet the demands of bare physical existence, is responsible for a large number of infant deaths during the first month of life. There is good reason to believe that this condition is largely due to the malnutrition and overwork of the mothers in the poorer class—whether they are employed outside the home or not. Dr. Ashby, a well-known English authority on this subject, declares:

> My own experience in the out-patient room entirely confirms the opinion that nutrition of the mother has a very important bearing on the nutrition of the foetus, and that the statement that the percentage of unhealthy births among the poor is small is not justified by facts. We constantly see fully developed infants a day or two old . . . clearly ill-fitted, as the event proves, to withstand the conditions of external existence. . . . There is no question

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[31] "Infant Mortality," *Bureau Publications,* No. 68, p. 41.

[32] "Infant Mortality," *Bureau Publications,* No. 20, p. 71.

of syphilis; they are the children of poor mothers who have lived hard lives of wear and tear during pregnancy, are themselves badly nourished and weakly, and have felt the pinch of poverty, though often perhaps poverty of the secondary sort.[33]

It would seem from the above discussion that any impartial attempt to appraise justly the influence of the extra-domestic employment of mothers upon infant mortality must give due attention to factors, often lightly passed over, which are not the consequence of the gainful work of mothers, but of an economic situation that is characterized by the prevalence of low wages.

Still-births, Abortions, and Miscarriages.

Apparently not much is known of the effect of the gainful employment of mothers upon the number of still-births. Of 2,662 births in New Bedford, seventy-five were still-births, giving a still-birth rate of 2.8 per cent of total births. It is noteworthy that, in New Bedford, the percentage of still-births in the group of non-employed mothers was 3.5, as compared with a percentage of 2 among gainfully employed women. In Manchester, on the contrary, the percentage of still-births was 5.5 among gainfully employed mothers, and only 4.1 among the group not so employed. The percentage was highest among the wage-earning mothers working away from home, where it rose to 7.5—a rate of seventy-five per thousand.

Whether the number of miscarriages among wage-earning mothers is higher than among those not gainfully employed is not apparent from a study of the reports. Abortions are far from uncommon among breadwinning mothers, who know full well that each new baby means illness, loss of work and wages, and one more mouth to feed. Anthony reports that among the 370 wage-earning mothers included in her investigation "abortions are common and unsuccessful attempts are even commoner. Patent medicine vendors and certain classes of doctors and midwives carry on an illicit business in the district. A practice which the women know to be so common they can scarcely regard as immoral; and, in any case, they feel that it is justified by their necessities."[34] From England come similar reports concerning gainfully employed mothers. In the anonymous "Introduction" to a volume of *Maternity Letters from Working Women,* the writer says:

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[33] Quoted in *Maternity Letters from Working Women* (George Bell & Sons, Ltd., London, 1915), p. 11. By permission.

[34] Anthony, *op. cit.*, pp. 154–155.

> There are many facts which go to prove that the habit of taking . . . drugs [to procure abortion] has spread to an alarming extent in many places among working women. Several of these letters confirm that conclusion. The practice is ruinous to the health of women, is more often than not useless for procuring the object desired, and probably accounts for the fact that many children are weakly and diseased from birth. But here again the cause of the evil lies in the conditions which produce it. Where maternity is only followed by an addition to the daily life of suffering, want, overwork, and poverty, people will continue to adopt even the most dangerous, uncertain, and disastrous methods of avoiding it.[35]

Persons who are opposed to birth control on moral grounds should be brought face to face with this situation and squarely confronted with this question: Which is more immoral, to prevent conception by scientific methods, or to take the life of an unborn infant at grave risk to its mother's life and health?

No working mother in her senses, who is striving with all her strength to feed and clothe a family already numbering three or four children, sometimes more, can possibly desire an addition to her family so long as these conditions exist. Therefore, when the children of these women die, the mothers do not grieve long. The mortality rate among the children of the poor is notoriously high. Anthony states that to the 370 gainfully employed mothers whom her committee personally investigated, 1,758 children had been born. Of these, 437 had died—almost 25 per cent! "They are strangely apathetic toward the loss of their children by death," she writes. "Almost as soon as the first pang of sorrow is past, the bereaved mother is ready to say that the little one 'is better off' and to speak of death as a merciful release from a life of hardships. One never hears from them the mourning cry of the mother in happier circumstances, 'So much love and pain and all for nothing.' "[36] Nor should we be surprised and repelled at this situation. It is well known that grinding poverty and a bitter daily struggle for mere existence blunt the finer sensibilities. These same mothers, who mourn their dead offspring so briefly, will work long hours to keep up a home for their children, and will show real heroism in the fight against poverty.

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[35] *Maternity Letters from Working Women,* p. 15.

[36] Anthony, *op. cit.,* p. 155.

Effects of Extra-domestic Employment of Married Women on Home and Child Care.

There is a widespread conviction that the homes and children of wage-earning mothers suffer from neglect, and there is some evidence to support this theory. Obviously a woman employed nine hours a day in a factory, or shaking clothes in a laundry, can only with great difficulty maintain a clean, well-ordered home and give intelligent care and oversight to her children. Yet it is surprising to read the accounts of social investigators concerning the decent home conditions they found among breadwinning women. Although the small flats or multiple houses in which many of these women live are cramped and lacking in conveniences, they are by no means always dirty. Wage-earning women will come home, tired out from a heavy day's work, and, after eating and resting a little, will start in washing the day's accumulation of dishes, sweeping, or doing the family wash. Anthony says that the women she investigated usually spend three or four evenings in the week washing and ironing. One mother of two spotless little girls, on being asked how she managed to do it, replied, "I wash and iron every day." Hard as this labor is, it is not so discouraging in its results as is the struggle to keep the home in order. The flats occupied by the poorer working class in New York consist usually of three or four rooms—a sitting-room, a combination kitchen and dining-room and one or two bedrooms. Closets do not exist, and clothing must be hung on hooks in the walls or thrown over chair-backs, unless the mother is fortunate enough to own a wardrobe and a bureau. The kitchen has no space for storage other than a shallow cupboard, thus necessitating the purchase of food from day to day. The space under the stationary tubs quite often is utilized to store the kindlings that children have dragged home from warehouses and stores, in the form of packing boxes, and have chopped up on the sidewalk. The family's entire stock of coal is kept in a box or sack in the kitchen. "Housekeeping in these cramped quarters is exceedingly difficult," writes Anthony. "Such a home absorbs an endless amount of labor without making much return in the way of tidy appearance; the housekeeper can overcome the dirt more easily than the disorder. 'It looks as if the place was upside down,' they would sometimes say, 'but it's clean anyway.' "[37]

Apparently little cooking and sewing are done in these homes. There is no time. The breadwinning mother soon learns the entire stock of canned foods at her disposal in the neighboring grocery stores. Anthony found "only occasional survivals of old-fashioned methods of preparing food . . ." among her 370 employed mothers. Not only are these methods time-consuming, but they use up precious fuel. Theorists are not lacking who maintain that the wage-earning mother expends and wastes more than she earns by not staying at home and looking thriftily to its management. But there is some evidence opposed to this view. In 1910, Rose Otto made a thorough inquiry into this question with reference to the factory-working married woman in Munich, Germany. Her conclusion was that without the wife's wage the family's necessities could not be met. "The size of the deficits," she declares, "disproved the assertion that the women could accomplish as much by thrifty housekeeping as by increasing the family income with their own earnings. On a merely pecuniary basis, this was seen to be impossible." Very interesting are Miss Otto's statements that "the domestic arrangements of families with mothers at work did not differ materially from those where the mother was not employed. Lowering the cost of food in families without a maternal wage-earner was only accomplished by lowering the quantity of food without making up the loss by the substitution of more nutritious values. Contrary to the general assumption that the women who do not work secure with the same expenditure a relatively better nourishment, it was shown that *the same kind and amount of foodstuffs were used in both types of families. . . .*"[38]

The causes for this similarity in housekeeping methods are not far to seek. As Miss Otto points out, the question uppermost in the minds of both the factory-working mother and the woman who spends a day at the family wash-tubs is the same: "What costs the least?" Of course a lack of training in household management and ignorance of food values is as true of the unemployed as of the gainfully employed mother. Neither knows how to make the most of the little she has to spend. Certainly, this careful German study suggests that further comparative studies of the differences in the home conditions and daily diet in households where mothers are wage-earners and in those where they remain at home are greatly needed before any sweeping statements can be made concerning the quality of housekeeping in each group.

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[37] For this entire subject, see Anthony, *op. cit.*, pp. 141–145; also see Gwendolyn Hughes, *Mothers in Industry* (New Republic, Inc., New York, 1925), Chs. IX, X.

[38] *Über Fabrikarbeit Verheirateter Frauen, Münchener Volkswissenschaftliche Studien* (Cottasche Buchhandlung, Munich, 1910), p. 288 ff. Quoted in Anthony, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

But if there be room for opposing opinions regarding the question of home management among employed and unemployed mothers, there can, it would seem, be none about child care. Even when a mother is busy at the stove or ironing-board, she can leave these tasks to perform essential services for a helpless baby or a toddling mite. Not so the mother working for wages away from home. She must leave the house early in the morning and perhaps not return to it until her day's work is done. At best she has but an hour at noon. The day nurseries are at present quite inadequate in number to meet the need, and are often far distant from the working mother's home. Anthony found that of 221 children below school age, only forty were placed in day nurseries. The others shifted for themselves at home. Indeed, only two day nurseries were established in this entire west side district in New York extending from Thirty-Fourth Street north to Fifty-Fourth, and from Eighth Avenue west to Eleventh. These two nurseries could accommodate only 120 children. Probably the small fee usually charged proved prohibitive for some mothers; and no doubt there was a certain amount of ignorant distrust of nursery methods of feeding and bathing. Then, too, the managing personnel of these nurseries, as the writer has more than once observed, are not always tactful and willing to show due regard for the views of mothers.

What happens to the hundreds of babies left at home when mothers start for the day's work? As we have seen, some receive intermittent care from sisters or brothers in school; some are left with a neighbor who takes charge of several at once; occasionally the father, out of employment or engaged only in night work, will take care of the little ones. Somehow these mothers manage, and surely not only at the expense of the babies, but at the cost of wearing anxiety on the part of women during their hours of absence.

The Health of the Wage-Earning Mother.

Whether the health of the wage-earning women in low-paid employments is markedly worse than among their sisters who stay at home, but also struggle to make both ends meet, is not known. It would seem reasonable to infer that, if the first group carries two heavy jobs instead of one, this double burden must be borne at a physical cost more or less serious, depending upon the physique of the worker. After hours of scrubbing in private homes or public buildings, or after a long day in a laundry or factory, these women, who rose very early to get breakfast, care for the baby, and prepare the older children for school, often come home in a pitiful condition of fatigue. Among the reports of social investigations we read accounts of the "shocking state of exhaustion" in which some of the laundry and factory workers reach home, when they have been working overtime, as they quite often do. And there are no hours of leisure for these women before bedtime and the next day's work. A score of neglected household tasks cry out for their attention, even when the older children assume their share of the work.

This continuous grind of toil must surely have its reaction upon the health of overburdened mothers. Katherine Anthony found hernia and varicose veins common among them, and could not estimate how much they suffered from bad teeth and aching feet. Certainly many of them were almost toothless before the age of fifty. Owing to the small income on which the family must be supported, most of these mothers neglect their health until they are really ill. Then, too, continuous pregnancies and confinements in the thoroughly unsanitary conditions that prevail in many homes of the poor working class do much to sap the health of many breadwinning mothers. Of 386 women who wrote the *Maternity Letters* previously referred to, 348 had had 1,396 live children, 83 still-births, and 218 miscarriages—an average of almost five pregnancies per mother! One woman had had eleven children and two miscarriages in twenty years; another had had five children and one miscarriage in nine years; still another had had five children and five miscarriages in twelve and one-half years. These are conditions that would undermine the health of the most vigorous human beings.

Social Responsibility.

Perhaps the above discussion has served to make plain that the extra-domestic work of wage-earning mothers is a grave social problem. Its roots lie deep in economic and social conditions that force the mother from the home to swell the ranks of the untrained wage-earners. Society provides neither her husband nor herself with a living wage; nor does it give either one the training that would enable him or her to enter the more adequately paid ranks of skilled labor. Through the entire duration of their married life, these couples are engaged in an arduous struggle to keep a home and to drive the wolf from the door. Probably the vast majority of these employed mothers would gladly abandon factory work, scrubbing, washing and ironing in laundries and in private homes, if they were assured of an income adequate to support their families. Although there is much evidence to show that child mortality is higher among gainfully employed mothers than among those not working away from home, it has not yet been clearly demonstrated that this evil is inseparable from the gainful employment of mothers. Rather does it appear that a considerable part of this high mortality among babies under one year could be prevented by (1) laws forbidding the return of mothers to work after childbirth for a considerably longer period than four weeks; (2) by enacting legislation providing maternity insurance and nursing benefits for mothers; (3) by public provision of neighborhood or factory nurseries, adequate in number and equipment to furnish excellent care to the babies (and children under school age) of employed women; (4) by a further extension of maternity centers, hospital facilities for expectant mothers whose cases are difficult, and visiting nurse services. It should not be forgotten that infant mortality rates among mothers who do not engage in gainful occupations are also high—in a few cases higher than among employed mothers—due, no doubt, to ignorance and poverty. If to the services just mentioned were added abundant provision of cheap, municipal laundries and of kitchens where hot, cooked food could be purchased and taken home in suitable containers, two of a working mother's gravest difficulties would be overcome. But these aids to workers found in a truly socialized society have been meagerly provided, if at all, under our present competitive and individualistic system.

A modern writer attributes the difficulties under which the working mother labors partly to the fact that we insist on maintaining the present-day home just as it was carried on in the past under different economic and social conditions. Other institutions have changed their modes of operation; not so the family, which is notoriously inefficient. She holds that the most destructive factor in the present family situation, the factor most responsible for retarding the establishment of adequate day nurseries, coöperative dining halls and laundries, and other such social devices for aiding the home;

> . . . is an economic system that does not provide a decent living for the majority of wage-earning families even after both mother and father have done their utmost to make it do so. A more adequate income would make possible the inauguration of a new type of division of labor, whereby well-trained individuals might as a vocation do most of the work that is now done in the home, in a manner that would leave mother, father, and children free to spend their leisure hours together free from the harassing details of home-making—which no woman does except from a sense of duty after a long day in the factory.[39]

Many socially minded men and women regard the employment of mothers as harmful chiefly because their children are left to look out for themselves, to run the streets after school hours, to form gangs, and in time to become delinquent. These consequences undoubtedly do follow in not a few instances. But the absence of the mother from her home is, apparently, not the only factor causing juvenile delinquency, since this phenomenon is found in homes where the mother is not engaged in gainful work. Here, again, intelligent social action is necessary in the provision of a sufficient number of well-equipped, well-staffed playgrounds, where the boys and girls of working parents may be drawn into organized games and sports after school hours. The very able Park Commissioner of New York, Robert Moses, is at present probably doing more to draw children from the streets and prevent delinquency by opening up scores of well-planned playgrounds than any other citizen of this vast metropolis. To the playgrounds should be added clubs, socially maintained, where children may develop worthwhile hobbies and new interests.

Women's Work in a Changing Economic Order.

There is another aspect of this many-sided question which should not be ignored. If complicated automatic machines continue to be invented at the same rate as in the past fifteen years, throwing men and women out of work, the time may soon be upon us when work, not leisure, will become a luxury. In such a situation it is possible that the extra-domestic labor of wage-earning women would be in less demand than that of men and these women would return to the work of the home. Another solution of the dilemma created by automatic machinery and the displacement of workers might be the employment of both men and women at greatly reduced hours of labor. In either case the primary requisites of a humane society are (1) provision of enough work at wages sufficient to enable men, or men and women, to support their families in decent comfort and with a sense of economic security; and (2) education of all human beings in the fruitful use of the increased leisure that is surely coming. Whether our present capitalist system, *whose essential reason for being is the making of profits*, can solve the problem of keeping men and women employed, so that the standard of living of American families may not fall to the level of Oriental peasants, is a question which only the future can decide.

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[39] Viva Boothe, "Gainfully Employed Women in the Family," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* Vol. 160, March, 1932, pp. 83, 84.

TOPICS FOR REPORTS

1. "The Occupational Progress of Women," 1910 to 1930.
   Bulletin of the Women's Bureau, No. 104 (United States Department of Labor, Washington D. C., 1933), pp. 1–53.
2. "Women in Industry."
   Bulletin of the Women's Bureau, No. 91 (United States Department of Labor, Washington, D. C., 1931). See sections on "Married Women Workers," "Women and Unemployment," and "Health Standards . . . ," pp. 17–50.
3. "Causal Factors in Infant Mortality." *Bureau Publications* No. 142 (United States Department of Labor, Washington, D. C., 1925), pp. 88–103, 125–164.
4. "Gainfully Employed Women in the Family."
   Viva Boothe in *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 160, March, 1932, pp. 75–86.
5. The Incidence of the Depression on the Family.
   Benjamin, Paul F. "The Family Society and the Depression," *Annals of the American Acadamy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 160, March, 1932, pp. 135–143.

ADDITIONAL SELECTED READINGS

1. "What the Wage-Earning Woman Contributes to Family Support," *Bulletin of the Women's Bureau*, No. 75 (United States Department of Labor, Washington, D. C., 1929).
2. "Home Environment and Employment Opportunities of Women in Coal-Mine Workers' Families," *Bulletin of the Women's Bureau*, No. 46

(United States Department of Labor, Washington, D. C., 1929).

3. "A Study of Breadwinning Mothers in Passaic, New Jersey," *Bulletin of the Women's Bureau,* No. 23 (United States Department of Labor, Washington, D. C., 1922), pp. 16–23, 35–43.
4. Katherine Anthony (editor), *Mothers Who Must Earn* (Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1914), Chs. III, V.
5. Gwendolyn Hughes, *Mothers in Industry* (New Republic, Inc., New York, 1925), Chs. IX, X.

CHAPTER X

PUBLIC AID TO MOTHERS AND DEPENDENT CHILDREN

THE MODERN TREND TOWARD PUBLIC AID FOR MOTHERS

AMONG all the contemporary movements concerned with the strengthening of family life, none is of more interest to the student of social institutions than the trend toward state aid of mothers and dependent children. Not only is it significant in itself, as representing a powerful means of family rehabilitation and improvement, but it marks a complete reversal of the age-old policy of society by which each family was left to struggle on by itself. Only when the home was actually broken up, or the parents were demonstrably unfit to rear their offspring, did the public authorities intervene to protect the children. Little by little during the nineteenth and the first quarter of the twentieth centuries, this public policy of "hands off" has been undermined by repeated acts of the state in behalf of dependent children. The compulsory education laws, the acts designed to protect children from industrial exploitation and cruelty as well as to secure for them proper nourishment and care and training from their parents, under penalty of their removal from the home, are, of course, merely so many instances of the direct intervention of the state in family affairs which, in the past, were left wholly to the determination of parents. With the decline of the patriarchal family there has developed a social conviction that the state must assume further responsibilities for the well-being of helpless children, especially when it is apparent that the family is unable to meet those responsibilities. Needless to say, the ancient philosophy of *laissez faire* has by no means released its hold upon the minds of men, despite these new ventures; witness the recent outcry raised by intelligent citizens against the proposed Child Labor Amendment as an invasion of family rights. Nevertheless, the present trend is in the direction of rendering increased public aid to families to hold them together and secure their more successful functioning.

This tendency has received a powerful impetus from the fact that our present industrial order makes it exceedingly difficult for the large group of unskilled wage-earners to hold their families together. As we have seen, the labor of hundreds of thousands of mothers in factories, laundries, and office-buildings is necessary to enable the home to continue. The very large increase in the number of juvenile offenders in recent years, and the fact that many of these youthful law-breakers have been deprived of parental care and guidance all day, year in and year out, have been brought to public attention by the press and the published reports of trained social workers. Slowly the conviction has taken root that, in self-protection, if for no more humane reasons, the state must strive to secure for all children so far as possible the benefits of a mother's nurture and training, even if that mother be only a moderately deserving and efficient person.

This enhanced appreciation of the virtues of a good home has been accompanied by increasing dissatisfaction with public institutions as places for the up-bringing of children. For more than a decade physicians, educators and social workers have expressed more and more vigorously their criticisms of public homes for children as places which tend to adopt the lock-step procedure of reformatories and to crush the budding individuality of boys and girls. Indeed there is evidence that these institutions leave their ineffaceable mark upon children in the form of a permanent stultification of initiative and self-confidence. Then, too, the mortality rate among babies committed to institutions is notoriously high, suggesting that these newcomers into a troubled world are vitally in need of a mother's affection and coddling.

Other forces have been at work impelling modern states toward a policy of public aid to mothers and families. Among these may be noted the inadequacy of private agencies to meet the enormous social need. Although many philanthropic organizations in the United States were aligned solidly against the policy of State relief, when it was first discussed, yet their own inability to grapple with the situation could not be denied. It is gratifying to note that, in recent years, the opposition of private agencies to such measures of family relief as the various States of the Union have set up has disappeared.

Another condition that has led governments to grant aid to mothers is the falling birth rate in well-nigh all civilized countries. In France, where the low birth rate has caused something like a panic among the official class, maternity benefits may be traced directly to fear of national decline and racial extinction. Similarly, the birth rate in other advanced countries has fallen at a rate sufficient to arouse general alarm, and statisticians and students of population problems in England and America have uttered repeated warnings to the public, pointing out the danger of a loss of national power and prestige if the birth rate continues to fall. It is probable that the publicity given to this subject has had an effect, more or less conscious, on the minds of legislators in both countries, disposing them more favorably to public measures designed to secure to the nation healthy, well-trained children. There is another aspect of this question that should not be overlooked. For years certain social writers have been asserting that *if the family continues to be regarded by the state as an independent and self-sufficient unit,* then the state has no right to demand large families, criticize small ones or, indeed, intervene at all to influence the size of families. Mr. H. G. Wells has vigorously presented this point of view:

> If having and rearing children is a private affair, then no one has any right to revile small families; if it is a public service, then the parent is justified in looking to the State to recognize that service and offer some compensation for the worldly disadvantages it entails. He is justified in saying that while his unencumbered rival wins past him he is doing the State a most precious service in the world by rearing and educating a family, and that the State has become his debtor.[1]

Another factor that has influenced governments in granting aid to mothers is a more thoroughgoing realization of the economic importance of child conservation. Vital statistics and morbidity statistics alike have shed revealing rays upon the waste of human life and vigor for which the slums and the industrial system must share the responsibility. Gradually it is being driven home to the minds of lawmakers that if healthy children are an asset to the nation and to productive industry, those children must be assured of decent home life and the nurture and oversight of a mother. Instead of leaving parents to flounder on in a morass of poverty while the state invokes the sacred tradition of family independence, one nation after another is taking measures to conserve the mother, the child, and home life such as would never have been contemplated a generation ago.

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[1] *Social Forces in England and America* (Harper and Brothers, New York, 1914), p. 271.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC AID TO MOTHERS

It is well known to sociologists that the United States has been one of the most backward of civilized nations in enacting legislation designed to protect laborers against sickness, accident, unemployment, and old age. With respect to all these forms of social relief legislation, Europe has taken the lead in passing laws that are more comprehensive and nation-wide than those enacted in the United States previous to the passage of the Social Security Act in 1935. Likewise in the field of state aid to mothers, European countries have led the way. The strongly individualistic spirit of the pioneers who colonized America, and who hewed out their homes and settlements in the wilderness, lives on in the America of to-day. This temper has, of course, been fostered by the enormous natural wealth of the country, and by the abundance of free land. Now that the nation's wealth is concentrated in the hands of relatively few and the supply of free land is exhausted, conditions of family need are developing in the United States similar to those of older European nations.

Germany was the pioneer nation to provide maternity aid on a national scale by including such relief in a compulsory sickness insurance act passed in 1883. Austria followed her lead in 1888, and at present almost every European country has provided for some form of maternity insurance or maternity grants to assist working mothers at the time of childbirth. In 1912 Australia passed a Maternity Allowance Act which will be considered later. In 1913 New Zealand took action providing a state system of widow's pensions; and in the same year France enacted a law providing public grants to mothers for a fixed period before and after childbirth.[2] In the United States, the first step toward providing any kind of public aid to mothers was taken in the State of Missouri in 1911. It took the form of public grants payable to mothers with dependent children, under carefully prescribed conditions. During the next twenty years mothers' aid laws were enacted in forty-four states of the Union, the District of Columbia, Alaska, and Hawaii.

Much diversity exists in the systems of public aid granted to mothers in most civilized nations. They range from national sickness insurance schemes, including maternity benefits, to grants made outright to mothers from state funds under legally prescribed conditions. A brief consideration of the systems in operation in certain leading countries will serve to make plain their extent, variety and importance.

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[2] See H. J. Harris, "Maternity Benefit Systems in Certain Foreign Countries," *Bureau Publications,* No. 57 (United States Children's Bureau, Washington, D. C., 1919), p. 38.

MOTHERS' PENSIONS OR ALLOWANCES

The countries in which allowances from public funds are granted to widows and certain other classes of mothers with dependent children are Great Britain, New Zealand, New South Wales, Victoria, Canada, Denmark, Switzerland,[3] Soviet Russia, and the United States. In all these lands, the mothers' pension movement marks a reaction against the institutional care of dependent children and a healthy recognition of the fact that even a moderately good home, presided over by a decent and fairly efficient mother, is a vastly better place in which to bring up children than a public institution, where boys and girls are reared and trained *en masse* with scant attention to individual differences.

Mothers' Allowances in the United States.

The origin of mothers' pensions in the United States may be traced to the White House Conference called by President Roosevelt in 1909 to consider problems connected with dependent children. Out of this conference emerged the conviction, expressed as a fundamental postulate, that children should not be deprived of home care except for urgent and weighty reasons. However, it is interesting to note that the disapproval of *public* relief to the needy which then prevailed was revealed in the conclusion that aid to mothers who are caring for dependent children should be administered by private agencies. Two years later, in 1911, the Missouri legislature made legal provision for the payment of public funds to mothers of dependent children. Because of a population limitation, the law at first applied only to Jackson County, in which Kansas City is situated; but in the same year the State granted to the city of St. Louis the power to establish a board of children's guardians with authority "to board out children to their own mothers." A storm of protest from the opponents of public relief to mothers greeted this new departure in legislation. Fortunately this did not prevent the State of Illinois from taking similar State-wide action in the enactment of its "fund to parents act" in July, 1911. This law—the first in the country applying to an entire State—contained the following provisions:

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[3] By decree of 1934.

> If the parent or parents of such dependent or neglected child are poor and unable to properly care for the said child, but are otherwise proper guardians and it is for the welfare of such child to remain at home, the court may enter an order finding such facts and fixing the amount of money necessary to enable the parent or parents to properly care for such child, and thereupon it shall be the duty of the county board, through its county agent or otherwise, to pay to such parent or parents at such times as said order may designate the amount so specified for the care of such dependent or neglected child until the further order of the court.[4]

The State of Colorado next fell into line, early in 1913, with a "mothers' compensation act" which was framed in harmony with the provisions of the Illinois law. By the end of 1913, eighteen States had enacted mothers' pension laws or aid-to-mothers laws. After 1913 the movement to grant public aid gained powerful headway in this country. By 1931, forty-four States, together with Alaska and Hawaii, had enacted laws aiding mothers of dependent children from public funds. Only the southern commonwealths of South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and New Mexico had failed at that time to put such laws on their statute books.[5]

Needless to say, this legislation has not been enacted without weighty opposition. It was urged that mothers' pensions would pauperize the families receiving them; that the law represented the inauguration of a vicious policy of State paternalism; that money should not be given to needy persons to spend in their own homes, but rather to organizations to spend for them; that new machinery for relief would have to be established which would duplicate the work of private relief agencies and conflict with it; that no proper supervision could be instituted over the ways in which the State's money was spent by private individuals. Happily, most of this opposition has ceased, and those who are most deeply concerned in the successful operation of the laws are at present bending every effort to their improvement by means of carefully framed amendments.

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[4] Laura A. Thompson, "Laws Relating to Mothers' Pensions," *Bureau Publications*, No. 63 (United States Children's Bureau, Washington, D. C., 1919), p. 7.

[5] See "Mothers' Aid, 1931," *Children's Bureau Publication*, No. 220 (Washington, D. C., 1933), pp. 8, 9.

The earlier name "widows' pensions," applied to this form of public aid to mothers, is already becoming obsolete in theory if not in usage. In a pamphlet concerning pension laws issued by the Children's Bureau in 1924 this statement is significant:

> The emphasis is being placed on providing home care for children, with a constantly broadening inclusion of the classes of children for whom grants for this purpose may be made. Aid is being administered, not as a "pension" but in accordance with the methods of social case work, including thorough investigation of the needs and resources of each family, attention to the physical and mental condition of each member of the family, and such assistance as will promote the welfare of each child receiving this form of public aid.

Owing to the experimental nature of the greater part of the early legislation outlined above, many of the State laws have been drastically revised since 1913. Most of these amendments have aimed to make the law more inclusive in its application, to improve its administration and to increase the State appropriations available for the payment of grants-in-aid. The pioneer laws tended to restrict public aid to widows with dependent children, thus denying relief to deserted mothers, or to those with incapacitated husbands. Little by little, public opinion has undergone a "sea-change" with respect to this policy, and in 1931 only two States limited the grant to widows. Nevertheless, in that year 82 per cent of the mothers receiving aid were widows. In ten States and the District of Columbia aid may be granted to any needy mother or to any mother with dependent children, and in ten other States the laws are almost as liberal, making assistance available to all dependent families in which the father is dead, deserting, divorced, physically or mentally incapacitated, or imprisoned. In the remaining twenty-three States aid may be granted to widows and to certain other restricted groups of mothers. In fifteen of these States deserted mothers may receive aid, but in only one (Texas) may divorced mothers be assisted. Mothers whose husbands are imprisoned may receive assistance in seventeen of the twenty-three States, and in all of these aid is available to mothers whose husbands are physically or mentally incapacitated. It is interesting to note that unmarried mothers are specifically made eligible for aid in the states of Michigan, Nebraska, and Tennessee. In 1931 there were fifty-five unmarried mothers receiving aid. Also, expectant mothers in need are eligible for assistance under the laws of seven States. In eighteen States and the District of Columbia the laws expressly provide that aid may be granted to a person other than the mother who stands in place of a parent, but in a few States the grants may only be paid to relatives. In five States fathers are included in the persons eligible for aid.

With regard to the *age* at which grants to children cease, some variety prevails. In all of the forty-four States except Kansas and Oklahoma children may receive assistance until they are legally exempt from school attendance. As many States have raised the age of compulsory school attendance, this means that large numbers of children are receiving grants up to the age of sixteen. Only four States provide that aid must stop at fourteen years of age and only four other States cease making grants when the child is fifteen.

Respecting the *amount* of grant permitted by law, great variations prevailed in 1931. The most enlightened theory holds that the grant should not be fixed by statute but by an administrative agency in accordance with family needs and resources. Eleven States and the District of Columbia have recognized this improved method by providing that it shall be left to the discretion of the administrative agency to decide the amount necessary to maintain a child or children properly in their own homes with their mothers. In New York State the law provides that the amount of aid shall not exceed the cost of institutional care. The remaining thirty-three States specify the maximum amount—weekly or monthly—that may be granted for the first child and for each succeeding child. In no State in 1931 did the maximum exceed $75 and in some of the poorer States it fell as low as $40. Naturally the size of the monthly allowance granted to a family will be influenced by the number of children eligible for aid, any other contributions to the family income usually in the form of earnings of family members, and the limitations on grants imposed by law. The average monthly grants per family[6] in 1931 showed a great range, from $69.31 in Massachusetts to $4.33 in Arkansas. Commenting on the meager amounts paid for mothers' aid in some states, the report of the Children's Bureau for 1931 states that these small average grants "would seem to indicate that in some local administrative units mothers' aid was considered as a pittance to keep the family alive rather than as a means of maintaining family life. . . .[7]

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[6] Calculated on expenditures for grants during the month of June, 1931.

Although, during the past decade, scores of thousands of mothers with dependent children have been assisted by the State to keep their homes together and give personal care and training to their children, much remains to be done before the relief granted these mothers is adequate either in amount or in kind. The recommendations made by a special committee on mothers' pensions in the Proceedings of the Conference on Mothers' Pensions held in Providence, Rhode Island, June 28, 1922, illumine the deficiencies that still exist, not only in the administration of aid to mothers, but in the provisions of the laws granting that aid. The committee urgently recommended first, that "mothers' pension agencies make it their policy to grant aid sufficient to meet the deficit in the family budget, so far as the maximum grant under the law permits." Clearly if the mother is not to work regularly in outside employment she must be given a sufficient sum to make it possible for her to remain at home at least four days a week and rear her family with proper attention to their physical well-being and moral training. To this end, the committee might well have added a corollary to the first recommendation, urging that mothers' pension agencies bend every effort to secure such changes in the various state laws as will make possible the payment of allowances sufficient to meet essential needs. The committee's second recommendation was to the effect that a budget should be made out for each family receiving aid, which should be based on a standard budget schedule as well as on the mother's estimate of family requirements. Such a budget should include housing, food, fuel and light, household supplies, health and incidentals. The latter item comprised recreation, education, emergencies, car-fare, insurance and spending money. A system of granting aid to mothers which takes careful account of actual, reasonable family needs, as determined by a standard budget schedule subject to revision from time to time, would seem to be the only intelligent and adequate method of deciding the amount of family allotments. Any other method is haphazard, undiscriminating, and probably inadequate in the relief it affords.

Third, the committee recommended that "all mothers' pension agencies require at intervals itemized household expense accounts from families receiving assistance." This appears to be a thoroughly reasonable requirement, and might well prove to be a valuable means of educating mothers in economical and businesslike administration of the household, as well as of revealing the inadequacy of the family allowance. Fourth, the committee recommended that literature on health, food values, menus, school lunches and the like, such as are issued by the United States Bureau of Education, the extension departments of the State colleges and other organizations, be distributed by mothers' pension agencies directly or through other sources. The fifth recommendation was to the effect that "some form of State supervision be adopted in those States not yet having it, for the accomplishment of effective administration of the mothers' pension laws." Finally it was recommended that "careful consideration be given to the formulation of general minimum standards of living, including housing, food, clothing, heat, light, education, recreation, health, household equipment, etc.," such as those worked out by Florence Nesbitt in her book *Household Management.*

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[7] "Mothers' Aid, 1931," *Children's Bureau Publication,* No. 220, p. 17. The author is indebted to this report for the facts given above.

Federal Aid to Families: The Social Security Act.

One of the significant and far-reaching effects of the economic depression of the years 1929–1936 in the United States is the growing tendency of localities and states to look to the federal government for assistance in carrying their heavy burden of public and family relief. Many localities have become bankrupt during these last grim years and not a few States have reached the verge of the abyss. Under the stress of widespread poverty and unemployment, closed factories and bankrupt banks, public opinion in America has veered from a sturdy belief in *laissez faire* government to the theory that the federal authorities should assume responsibility for assisting local units of government in feeding and employing their idle millions and in holding homes together. Sympathetic with this theory, the Roosevelt administration has brought about the enactment of the first Social Security Act [8] in the nation's history—an act which sounds the knell of the old "let alone" philosophy of government that the United States inherited from eighteenth-century Europe.

An important section of the act provides for Aid to Dependent Children (Mothers' Aid) by means of federal grants. A Social Security Board is set up to administer these grants to such States as submit to the Board satisfactory, State-wide, mandatory plans for aid to dependent children. An initial appropriation of $24,750,000 was authorized by the act to be allotted to those States whose plans proved acceptable to the Board, on condition that the States met two thirds of the expense of mothers' aid. The federal grant would meet one third of the cost; but payments in excess of $18 monthly for the first child and $12 monthly for each succeeding child would not be matched by the Board. This means that a family of three dependent children will be aided by the federal government only if the total monthly payment does not exceed the niggardly sum of forty-two dollars. Any financial grant beyond that amount must be met by the State or the local unit. It seems reasonable to infer that one of the first effects of the participation of the national government in aid to dependent children may be a cutting down of State grants.

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[8] Passed by both Houses of Congress and approved by the President August 14, 1935.

The conditions of federal aid prescribed in the act are that grants shall be made in behalf of a needy dependent child or children under sixteen by reason of the death, absence, or incapacity of a parent. Payments may be made to the responsible parent or to "an enumerated relative in a residence maintained as a home." The act specifically provides that the State residence requirement must not disqualify a child who has resided in the State for a year preceding application or who was born in the State in the preceding year if the mother has resided in the State one year preceding the birth of the child. In March, 1936, twenty-four states and Hawaii were receiving federal grants.

Despite the fact that federal grants in behalf of needy, dependent children are meager indeed, it must not be overlooked that the paramount significance of the Social Security Act lies in the abandonment by the federal government of the political philosophy of *laissez faire* individualism in accordance with which families in direst need and distress were let alone to struggle on by themselves or with the uncertain aid of charitable societies. For better or worse the nation has now assumed responsibility for its dependent and needy children.

Mothers' Pensions in Foreign Countries.

Only a brief sketch can be given of the laws of certain foreign countries providing for mothers' pensions or allowances from public funds.

Although there is no legislation in Canada covering the whole Dominion, seven provinces have taken separate action. Manitoba led the way in 1916 and was followed by Saskatchewan and Alberta in 1917 and 1919 respectively. In 1930 mothers' allowance legislation was in operation in five provinces and acts were passed that year in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. As in the United States needy widows are eligible to receive aid in all seven provinces, but the husband's incapacity, imprisonment or desertion qualifies the mother to receive aid in only a few. Only in British Columbia are unmarried mothers and divorced wives [9] admitted to assistance. The cost of the allowances is carried entirely by the provincial treasury in British Columbia, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Saskatchewan; in Alberta, Manitoba, and Ontario one half the expense is met by provincial funds and one half by municipal. The funds are administered by an official appointed by the provincial authorities. Grants are made separately in behalf of the mother and of each dependent child under fifteen or sixteen. On the whole the allowances are more generous than in many States of the American Union. For example, in British Columbia the maximum allowance per month is $42.50 for the mother and her first child, with $7.50 monthly for each additional child. In Nova Scotia the maximum that may be paid any family is $60 a month; in Ontario the maximum in all cases is $80 per month.

New Zealand enacted the New Zealand Pensions Act in 1913, an act superseding an earlier widows' pension law of 1911. This later act of 1913 applies to old-age and military pensions as well as widows' pensions, bringing them all under the administration of one department. Under this law, public aid is granted to widows (not to mothers with incapacitated husbands) who have dependent children under the age of fourteen. Applications must be made to the registrars of pensions and a hearing before a magistrate must precede the grant or refusal of public aid. The law provides that the magistrate must be satisfied that the widow "is of sober habits and of good moral character, and that the pension will be properly used for the support of her children." For one child, the amount payable as pension is twelve pounds a year; for each additional child, the pension is increased six pounds a year. But these amounts are "subject to a deduction of one pound for every pound by which the annual income of the widow and her children . . . after deducting personal earnings to an amount not exceeding one hundred pounds, exceeds the sum of thirty pounds."[10]

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[9] If the divorce were granted on grounds of the desertion or adultery of the husband.

It will readily be seen that the New Zealand law contains two of the defects found in certain of our own State laws: (1) the pension is restricted to widows, thus denying any aid from public funds to worthy mothers of dependent children who have been deserted, or who are struggling to maintain a home after their husbands have become physically or mentally incapacitated; (2) a fixed amount is paid for each child, making it impossible for the amount of the pension to be adapted to the needs of the family. Obviously the grants made under the New Zealand law are quite inadequate. Sixty dollars a year (£12) for the first child, and thirty dollars additional for each other child, would amount, in the case of a family with three children under fourteen, to approximately $120 a year—a sum too small to support even one child in decent comfort.

The Danish law, enacted in 1913 and effective January 1, 1914, provides that widows "who are considered indigent shall, provided they are entitled to support in cases of continuous need, have the right to a public contribution toward the support and education of their legitimate children or children adopted under marriage, without the disabilities attaching to poor relief." Indigency is defined as a condition in which the widow's property does not exceed 4,000 kr. ($1,072), with the addition of 500 kr. for each child under fourteen years. Moreover, the income of the widow must not exceed the amount exempt from State taxation in the commune concerned. The allowance provided by the original law was 100 kr. ($26.80)[11] yearly until the child was two years old; 80 kr. ($21.44) yearly until the child was twelve years; 60 kr. ($16.08) yearly until the child reached the age of fourteen. Under certain circumstances the allowances may now be continued up to eighteen years. These amounts were materially increased during the lean years of 1918 and 1919, but have been at all times quite inadequate. Because of this fact, many widows have been forced to refuse the grants and seek relief from the poor funds. Indeed, a temporary law of October, 1915, permitted widows to supplement their meager allowances by applying for aid from the poor-relief funds—thus defeat-ing the essential purpose of the Widows' Pension Law, namely, to make grants to widows from public funds which should bear no stigma of poor-relief.

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[10] Thompson, "Laws Relating to Mothers' Pensions," *Children's Bureau Publication,* No. 63, pp. 237–247.

[11] At the rate of exchange current at that time.

In March, 1920, the law was amended and the allowances were increased to 200 kr. during the first four years of life, 160 kr. until the twelfth year and 120 kr. thereafter. The cost of the allowances is divided equally between the state and the commune concerned. When the widow receives poor relief or assistance from municipal auxiliary funds, the present law expressly provides that the public grants will cease. In 1931 the number of widows assisted was 7,542 and these mothers had 14,836 dependent children.[12]

Switzerland has only very recently provided pensions for needy widowed mothers. By a federal decree of March 9, 1934, which went into effect six days later, the sum of one million francs from the federal treasury [13] is to be distributed among the cantons to be used exclusively for pensions to widows under sixty-five and to orphans under eighteen. The mothers must be Swiss citizens with an income insufficient for their own support and that of their dependent children. The decree emphasized the importance of careful investigation of every case and of keeping mother and child together. Each canton is left free to arrange details of distribution of pensions, under the general supervision of the federal government, and each must make an annual report to the central authorities.[14] Here, again, allowances for mothers are an outright gift of the government, not provided for in a system of social insurance.

At various times the government of Soviet Russia has issued regulations on aid to unmarried or deserted mothers, or widows, all designed to keep mother and children together. By a decree of September 26, 1927, the People's Commissariat of Public Health urged the importance of financial aid to such mothers to enable them to keep their children with them. This was a much-needed means of preventing juvenile vagrancy and delinquency—a serious problem in Soviet Russia at that time. In 1930 a law was enacted providing pensions for the family of a deceased breadwinner—parent, brother or sister—provided he or she was in a gainful occupation at the time of his death or disappearance. Pensions are paid to children under sixteen (or under eighteen if still attending school), to children who have lost their working capacity before the ages of sixteen or eighteen and to parents if incapacitated for work, or aged.[15]

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[12] *International Survey of Social Service, International Labor Office Studies and Reports,* Series M, No. 11 (Geneva, 1933), p. 172.

[13] About $320,000 at the rate of exchange in November, 1935.

[14] Children's Bureau, typewritten material based on the laws of the respective countries. October, 1935.

The Widows, Orphans and Old Age Contributory Pensions Acts of Great Britain.

In 1925, the Conservative government of Great Britain enacted important legislation securing to widows (or widowers) with dependent children and to orphans the payment of weekly allowances. The pensions are classified into contributory and non-contributory. Contributory pensions are payable to (1) the widow of a man insured under the National Health Insurance Act who had paid 104 contributions prior to his death after January 4, 1926, when the act went into effect; (2) the children of an insured man; (3) orphan children, i.e., those who have lost both parents and are offspring of an insured man or an insured woman. The word *child* is interpreted to include a stepchild or the illegitimate child of a man or his wife, who was living with him at the time of his death; or the illegitimate child of an insured widow, who was living with her at the time of her death. Non-contributory pensions will be paid to widows, children, and to orphans of men or widows who die before the commencement of the act, but who would have been insured persons if the law had been in force.

The amounts of pensions paid are ten shillings per week for widows, five shillings for the first child under fourteen, and three shillings for subsequent children, seven shillings sixpence for orphans or for children who are removed from the custody of their mother. In the case of children these allowances are paid only until the children are fourteen and one half years of age, or up to sixteen years in cases where the child is in full-time attendance at a day school. To these pensions men and women in employment will be required to contribute at the rate of ninepence for a man (4½ pence paid by the employer and 4½ pence by the employee) and 4½ pence for a woman (2½ pence paid by the employer and 2 pence by the employee). These rates include payments toward old-age pensions after sixty-five years. No widow may receive a pension if she remarries or cohabits, nor will pensions be paid to persons in poor-law institutions, lunatic asylums, or prisons (without the option of a fine).

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[15] Children's Bureau, typewritten material based on the laws of the respective countries. October, 1935.

To the fund required to meet the expense of this national pension system, the government of Great Britain pays "in principle" the difference between expenditure and contribution income; in particular it pays the entire cost of non-contributory pensions. The pensions are paid through the Post Office. Contributions by employers and employees are paid as under the Insurance Act, a stamp combining health and pension contribution being provided by the government to be attached to the necessary document. On December 31, 1930 the number of widows benefiting from the Widows' Pension Act was 570,023, and the total of child beneficiaries was 325,675. The state subsidy for these pensions was £9,315,000 or about $46,500,000.[16]

An examination of this act reveals some interesting facts. All workingmen and women who are compelled to take out insurance under the National Health Insurance Act are also compelled to be insured for widows', orphans', and old-age pensions, with the exception of a few exempted persons who will not be required to contribute to the old-age allowance. Thus Great Britain is committed to the principle that all wage-earners, except the very poorest, should be required to coöperate with the government and the employer in providing for future contingencies such as are bound to arise when the chief provider of a family dies leaving a widow and young children. It is a fair question whether such a system of contributory payments by workers is not a sounder one than that in use in the United States, where the pension is a gift of the State. The British method would, it seems, better insure the independence and self-respect of the pensioner. Further, it should be noted that the British act does not discriminate against illegitimate children, thus taking an important step toward the righting of an ancient wrong—the hardships wrought by the attitude and customs of Christian nations upon innocent children born out of wedlock. Finally, it should be noted that, by this national act, Great Britain has established a uniform widows' and orphans' pension system throughout England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland, whereas in the United States each commonwealth enacts its own separate laws, some of which are markedly inferior to those of the more progressive States.

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[16] Facts taken from *Woman's Leader,* August 21, 1925—an English publication. More recent information has been secured from the *International Survey of Social Services,* pp. 322–324.

MATERNITY BENEFIT SYSTEMS IN EUROPE AND THE UNITED STATES

Long before the awful carnage of the World War had aroused the governments of Europe to the importance of conserving the lives of mothers and infants, Germany, Austria, and Hungary had developed maternity benefit systems.[17] The compulsory sickness insurance laws of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Denmark provided for maternity aid on a national scale between the years 1883 and 1892. The early example of these European countries was followed by Belgium in 1904; Switzerland and Great Britain in 1911; Russia, Sweden, and Rumania in 1912; France and the Netherlands in 1913; and Norway in 1919. Since the close of the World War, most of the smaller European states have enacted some form of maternity benefit legislation. To these nations should be added the new-world countries of Australia, New Zealand, and the United States, which have provided forms of aid to mothers at childbirth differing markedly from the systems developed in Europe.

Forms of Maternity Aid.

A glance at the laws of the various nations that have provided state-wide systems of maternity benefits serves to reveal the bewildering diversity that exists among them. However, it is possible to classify the systems under the following heads: (1) *compulsory* sickness insurance, including maternity insurance, to which employers, employees, and sometimes the state contribute; (2) maternity insurance in connection with *voluntary* sickness insurance, subsidized and controlled by the state; (3) compulsory maternity insurance in the absence of a national sickness insurance system; (4) maternity benefits without insurance in the form of straight grants to mothers from public funds; (5) the provision to mothers of medical attendance, nursing service, and helpful advice during pregnancy and confinement furnished by voluntary or public organizations with or without subsidies from the state. The first two systems are by far the most general, being in operation in 1925 in twenty-five states of Europe.[18] The third method is restricted to Italy and Spain. The fourth system is established in Australia; the fifth in New Zealand and the United States.

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[17] The facts in the following account are derived from the admirable study by H. J. Harris for the United States Children's Bureau entitled "Maternity Benefit Systems in Certain Foreign Countries," *Bureau Publications*, No. 57 (1919). More recent information has been obtained from the *International Survey of Social Services* (1933) cited above.

Maternity Benefits in Connection with a National Insurance System.

In those European countries that have adopted some form of national insurance against sickness, maternity benefits are included in this scheme. As we have seen, however, the insurance system may be compulsory or voluntary. Among the more important European countries that have made provision for compulsory sickness insurance, including maternity insurance, are Germany, Austria, Hungary, Great Britain, France, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Rumania, Jugo-Slavia, Switzerland (in cantons electing this system), Czechoslovakia, and Greece. Maternity insurance in connection with voluntary sickness insurance, subsidized and controlled by the state, prevails in Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Sweden, and Switzerland (in certain cantons). With respect to financing the scheme, two methods are in general use. (1) The income of the sickness and maternity insurance funds is derived wholly from an assessment on wages, of which the employer and the employed pay fixed proportions, the state contributing nothing. Such is the method in Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, and several other countries. (2) The insurance funds are obtained by contributions from the employer, the employee, and the state. State grants or subsidies to insurance funds are made in Great Britain, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland, and Italy.

The *benefits* enjoyed by those eligible to maternity aid under the insurance systems reveal considerable diversity. Those of Austria, Germany, Norway, Czechoslovakia, Luxemburg, Poland, and certain Swiss cantons are, perhaps, most generous and comprehensive. In these countries, the sickness (including maternity) funds provide for two or more of the following forms of benefit:

1. Medical benefit. This consists of free medical attendance and midwife service, free medicines, and appliances. If the expectant mother's

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[18] Stencilled sheet of information prepared by the United States Children's Bureau and dated March 27, 1925.

condition before confinement is not satisfactory, she may be given medical treatment and maintenance in a maternity hospital. In such cases a fixed proportion may be deducted from the daily cash benefit described below.

2. Maternity benefit. Women who have paid sickness insurance for a stipulated length of time may receive, in addition to medical and nursing care, a cash benefit. In Germany [19] this consisted of a lump sum of ten Reichmarks (about $4.00) and a further cash benefit of not less than half a Reichmark (about 20 cents) daily for four weeks before confinement and six weeks after it. In France, under the new Social Insurance Law which came into force on July 1, 1930, maternity benefit (like sickness benefit) consists of an allowance equal to half the basic wage, paid for every working day for six weeks before confinement and six weeks after.

3. Nursing benefit. In certain countries, as France, Germany, and Czechoslovakia, a nursing benefit is paid to every insured woman who remains at home for a stipulated period to nurse her child. The benefit allowance in Germany was in 1930 equal to half the maternity benefit (not less than 0.25 Reichmarks or about ten cents) daily, paid for twelve weeks. In France an insured woman who nurses her child is entitled to a monthly allowance of 150 francs (about $9.75) for the first four months, 100 francs in the fifth and sixth months and fifty francs thereafter for not more than nine months.[20]

The maternity benefit in Great Britain is limited to the payment of a lump sum of £2 derived from the dues paid by an insured husband for at least forty-two weeks and an equal amount from dues paid in to the fund by the wife, if she herself is insured. Both these payments are given to the wife and constitute her property. The second payment, made only to insured married women, imposes upon them the obligation to abstain from gainful employment for a period of four weeks after childbirth, under penalty of a fine for infraction of the regulation. If the beneficiary has been a member of an approved mutual benefit society for from three to five years and this society has a "disposable surplus," such surplus may be used by the society for the provision of additional maternity benefits in the form of cash payments or hospital treatment. The maternity benefits under the British scheme of sickness insurance seem distinctly inferior to those of either France or Germany. Not only is the payment of a lump sum of $10, or at most $20, probably less useful to the insured mother than payment of daily allowances over a considerable period of time, but the definite provision of medical services is lacking in the British act. Such services as an approved society may offer are made conditional upon the existence of a surplus and upon extended membership. Moreover, the British law requires that the woman abstain from gainful employment only for four weeks after childbirth, with no requirement regarding employment preceding confinement. Finally the law makes no provision for a nursing benefit.

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[19] In 1930.

[20] *International Survey of Social Services,* pp. 205–206, 277–278.

In Italy, where compulsory maternity insurance was established by the Act of July 17, 1910, the insurance funds are administered by a body called the National Maternity Fund. The expenses of maternity insurance are met by an annual contribution of four lire by the employer, three lire by the insured woman, and a state grant of eighteen lire for each confinement. A benefit amounting to 150 lire (about $12) is payable to every woman worker in the event of confinement or miscarriage, if the latter is not self-induced. In addition, an insured woman is entitled to unemployment benefit plus a supplement of from one half a lira (about 4 cents) to 4.25 lire (or 26 cents) according to the wage class to which she belongs. In 1930 the maternity benefits paid for 44,030 confinements amounted to 4,753,000 lire.[21] It will be seen that Italy, like Great Britain, makes the chief benefit of maternity insurance the payment of a lump sum. Although an unemployment benefit is paid for a month preceding and a month following childbirth the amounts paid are pitifully small, ranging from 1.25 lire to 3.75 lire per working day. Even with the supplements mentioned above, these payments seem very meager, varying from a minimum of approximately 14 cents to 64 cents per day. Only the relatively high-paid women workers in the upper wage level would derive much assistance from these benefits.

State Benefits to Mothers without Insurance.

Australia is the only country which makes a state grant to *uninsured* mothers on the occasion of childbirth. The Australian law of 1912 provides for a substantial allowance of £5 to be paid for each case of childbirth in the Commonwealth, without requiring any contribution whatever from the beneficiary. The prime minister, in presenting the bill, declared that great care had been exercised to avoid any stigma of charity attaching to the grant. He characterized the measure as providing "a maternity allowance for the protection and care of the mother, which is tantamount to the care and protection of the unborn child." In his vigorous defense of the proposed bill he declared that it "is the duty of the community, and especially the duty of a national parliament, to protect every possible life." Such measures, he argued, were justified on economic grounds as "a provision for the safety of the State." With the exception of natives and Asiatics, the allowance is paid to all mothers of modest income who are inhabitants of Australia, *whether married or unmarried*. If the child is not alive within twelve hours after birth, the claimant must present a medical certificate to the effect that the infant was a viable child, i.e., capable of living. In 1912–1913, the total claims presented amounted to 83,094; in 1916–1917, these claims had risen to 132,866, involving an expense to the government of $3,221,793.[22] The maternity allowances are paid out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund which is formed by amounts voted by the Commonwealth Parliament.

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[21] *International Survey of Social Services,* pp. 427–428. The amount of the unemployment benefit is not stated.

Since the original act was passed, the amount of the grant to mothers has been reduced to £4 for each birth, even if more than one child is born. In order to claim the allowance the woman must prove that her income, together with that of her husband, did not exceed £260 during the year preceding confinement. On June 30, 1931, the number of beneficiaries of state grants was 126,149 and the amount of allowances was £630,652. Thus Australia is committed to the policy of paying a flat sum to needy mothers at maternity, but the state furnishes no medical or nursing care and no unemployment benefit.[23]

Although the government of New Zealand has no national system of maternity allowances, the state does pay an allowance of £6 upon the birth of a child to any member of the National Provident Fund or of approved Friendly Societies of at least twelve months' standing. These organizations are in the nature of voluntary benefit societies which any person whose income does not exceed £300 may join. The old-age pensions and other benefit payments are met by the contributions of members, but the maternity allowance is paid from a special government grant.[24]

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[22] H. J. Harris, "Maternity Benefit Systems in Certain Foreign Countries," *Bureau Publications,* No. 57 (United States Children's Bureau, Washington, D. C., 1919), pp. 17–19.

[23] *International Survey of Social Services, op. cit.,* p. 28.

Maternity Aid in the United States.

Although American physicians, nurses, and social workers had been urging for years the importance of better health protection of motherhood and infancy, it was not until November 23, 1921, that the United States Congress passed the law entitled "An Act for the Promotion of the Welfare and Hygiene of Maternity and Infancy." By the terms of the act, (1) federal financial aid was furnished to the States complying with the conditions laid down by the law; (2) the administration of the aid was given over to the Children's Bureau; (3) such aid was to be applied to the reduction of maternal and infant mortality and to the protection of the health of mothers and infants; (4) the states were vested with complete authority to initiate and administer their own plans to achieve these ends, subject only to approval by the Federal Board of Maternity and Infant Hygiene.[25]

Beginning June 30, 1923, the act provided for a federal appropriation of $1,240,000 annually for five years. Of this amount, $240,000 was to be equally apportioned among the States and granted outright; $240,000 additional was to be equally apportioned and granted if matched dollar for dollar by State funds; and $710,000 was to be apportioned to the States on the basis of population, and granted if matched by an equal State appropriation.

The States might secure the benefits of the act by (1) the formal acceptance of the provisions of the law by the State legislature; (2) the designation of a State agency to coöperate with the Children's Bureau in carrying out the purposes of the act. Those States having a child welfare or child hygiene division of the board of health must designate that department. (3) The designated agency must submit detailed plans for carrying out the purposes of the act to the Children's Bureau for approval by the Federal Board of Maternity and Infant Hygiene, and also make such reports to the Children's Bureau concerning its operations and expenditures for the purposes of the act as the Bureau may prescribe.

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[24] "Infant Mortality and Preventive Work in New Zealand," *Children's Bureau Publication,* No. 105 (Washington, D. C., 1922).

[25] See the pamphlet on "The Promotion of the Welfare and Hygiene of Maternity and Infancy," *Bureau Publications,* No. 137 (United States Children's Bureau, Washington, D. C., 1924).

By June 30, 1923, the legislatures of all the States had convened and forty commonwealths out of the forty-eight had accepted the provisions of the act, commonly called the Sheppard-Towner Act. Subsequently, three other States fell in line, leaving in April, 1926, only five States—Maine, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Illinois and Kansas—still holding out against the policy of accepting federal aid in the administration of social benefits.[26] The federal grants available to the coöperating states ranged from $11,311.12 in the case of Wyoming, with a population in 1920 of only 194,402 souls, to $89,041.78 in the case of New York, with a population of over 10,000,000. Although these grants may seem small, in view of the scope and importance of the undertaking, they were sufficient to stimulate the States to match the Federal allotments and engage in a much-needed crusade to save the lives of mothers and new-born infants.

The report of the Federal Board for the year ended June 30, 1923, states that educational activities in the form of lectures, demonstrations, exhibits, and educational films have played a prominent part in State programs. This is as it should be, since the success of the enterprise in any State is dependent upon the intelligent coöperation of the general public. Information concerning the hygiene of pregnancy is given in two ways, (1) by the distribution of literature and (2) by consultations with expectant mothers. In 1923, twenty-five States reported using booklets, pamphlets or letters wholly or in part devoted to the subject of prenatal care. Only a few states have prepared their own pamphlets on this subject, preferring to use the excellent bulletin on "Prenatal Care" issued by the Federal Children's Bureau. In many States, sets of five to twelve prenatal letters were sent monthly to expectant mothers whose names had been furnished by their physicians to the State child hygiene division. Another educational effort took the form of infant health conferences, held by thirty-six States, and maternity conferences, held by thirty-one States. In 1925, the State reports showed that 18,154 child health conferences had been held throughout the country by the various State agencies administering federal funds.

Excellent as these educational plans may be, they should be reinforced and extended by the establishment of *permanent* child health and maternity consultation centers. Only twelve States had organized such centers up to June 30, 1923. The report issued by the Children's Bureau for 1924, however, declares that an "objective in most of the States is state-wide establishment of permanent, locally supported children's health centers and prenatal centers, accessible to all the population in need of such assistance and instruction. . . . [These centers] are everywhere recognized as the best teaching agencies."[27] Up to June, 1924, 1,084 children's health centers had been established by the forty-three coöperating States. The report for 1925 records the opening of 506 new centers during that year, as well as sixty-five additional prenatal centers. In 1926, 283 new health centers were opened, 135 being combined prenatal and child health centers, 140 child health centers and eight prenatal centers. A successful device employed by several Southern commonwealths takes the form of an automobile outfitted as a center. Such a "healthmobile" has been "found to be of especial advantage in initiating a maternity and infancy program in areas where the nature of the work is little understood. Since it attracts attention all along the route it has great educational value."[28]

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[26] "The Promotion of the Welfare and Hygiene of Maternity and Infancy," *Bureau Publications,* No. 78, p. 1, footnote.

In all the States, special efforts were made in 1924 to launch a program for prenatal care. Investigations have disclosed that in many rural sections of the country women do not have medical supervision during pregnancy, nor medical care during confinement and the lying-in period. Failure to appreciate the importance of prenatal care is far more general than many persons realize. In Wyoming, the director of this work reported that in some counties "40 per cent of the women were not attended by doctor, nurse or midwife during childbirth." In view of these conditions, the Federal Board states that "the prenatal program is still fundamentally educational for the general population as well as for the individual woman who is reached through the conference."[29]

Midwife surveys were undertaken in many States and steady "progress has been made in acquiring definite information on the number and character of midwives practising legally or illegally, also in registering, supervising, and instructing the best of these women and eliminating those who seem unscrupulous as well as wholly untrained."[30] An en-

[27] *Bureau Publications,* No. 146, p. 4.
[28] *Ibid.,* p. 5.
[29] *Ibid.,* pp. 9–10.
[30] *Ibid.,* p. 11.

couraging result of these State efforts were reports to the effect that midwives unwilling to comply with State laws were ceasing to practice.

During the seven years in which the Maternity and Infancy Act was in effect progress was made along many lines, particularly in the direction of education of public opinion, extension of facilities for maternity and infant care to localities where none had existed, establishment of community public health nursing service, provision of hospital facilities for complicated pregnancies and confinements, and increased local appropriations to cover all public maternity and infancy activities. On the other hand, in not a few States only the preliminary work of educating public opinion was attempted. When the student considers the many aspects of this social project—educational, medical, administrative, and financial—he will not be unduly critical when he learns that in "no State can the whole field be said to have been plowed the first time."

Nowhere is the historic *laissez faire* individualism of the American Congress shown more clearly than in the refusal of that body to extend the provisions of the Sheppard-Towner Act beyond 1929. Reluctantly the Congress responded to popular appeals by continuing the law for two years after it had lapsed in 1927, but the strength of Congressional sentiment to the effect that the federal government should not render financial aid to "purely local" projects for human betterment was so great that it defeated all efforts of social organizations to extend the life of the act. As might have been (and was) expected, the maternal and child health work in all but the wealthiest States suffered a disastrous set-back, which was aggravated by the financial catastrophe of November, 1929, with the subsequent economic breakdown. For nearly six years thereafter the States were left to themselves to cope with the ever-growing problems of prenatal care and maternal and child health

The Social Security Act: Provisions for Maternal and Child Health.

While the social security bill was being framed in 1934, strong pressure was brought to bear on the federal government by public health agencies, women's organizations, and philanthropic societies to make provision for promoting the health of mothers and children. In consequence the act passed in 1935 includes a section on maternal and child health. The law provides for the extension and improvement of local maternal and child health services and for the development of *demon-*

stration services in needy areas and among groups of families in special need. Coöperation with medical, nursing and welfare groups is also provided. By the terms of the act an appropriation of $20,000 is authorized for each State and an additional $1,800,000 will be distributed to States in proportion to the number of live births. Also, a supplementary sum of $980,000 will be distributed on the basis of need, taking into account the number of live births in the State. The total amount authorized for the first year is $3,800,000. The Children's Bureau is designated as the federal agency to administer the act. To benefit by the provisions of the law a State must submit a plan for promoting maternal and child health acceptable to the Chief of the Children's Bureau and designate a single State agency to carry out the provisions of the plan, preferably the State Board of Public Health. Exclusive of the federal allotment on the basis of need, each State receiving federal grants must appropriate an equal amount to carry out the purposes of the act. Once more, then, the United States has assumed responsibility for the prenatal care of its mothers and for health services to mothers and children. Inadequate as are the grants to States, this defect should not blind the student to the paramount importance of this turn-about-face in the policy of the federal administration. The pressure of changed conditions is compelling the United States to abandon an outworn philosophy of the proper functions of government.

TOPICS FOR REPORTS

1. Compare the maternity and infant welfare work in New Zealand with that in the United States. Which, in your judgment has the better system and why?
   "Infant Mortality and Preventive Work in New Zealand," *Children's Bureau Publication,* No. 105 (Washington, D. C. 1922).
   "The Promotion of the Welfare and Hygiene of Maternity and Infancy," *Children's Bureau Publication,* No. 178 (Washington, D. C., 1926).
2. The Administration of Mothers Aid: Its Gains and Its Defects.
   "Administration of Mother's Aid in Ten Localities . . . ," *Children's Bureau Publication,* No. 184 (Washington, D. C., 1928), pp. 1–27, 67–90, 91–110.
3. Principles Underlying Public Aid to Mothers.
   Emma Lundberg, "Public Aid to Mothers with Dependent Children," *Children's Bureau Publication,* No. 162 (Washington, D. C., 1928).
4. Remedial Agencies Aiding the Family in a Period of Social Change.
   Laurence K. Frank, "Social Change and the Family," in "The Modern

American Family," *Annals of the Amearican Academy of Political and Social Science,* Vol. 160, March, 1932, pp. 94–102.

Joanna C. Colcord, "Remedial Agencies Dealing with the American Family," *loc. cit.,* pp. 124–134.

ADDITIONAL SELECTED READINGS

1. Edith Abbott, and Sophonisba P. Breckinridge, "The Administration of the Aid-to-Mothers Law in Illinois," *Children's Bureau Publications,* No. 82 (Washington, D. C., 1921), pp. 47–71, 59–64.
2. H. J. Harris, "Maternity Benefit Systems in Certain Foreign Countries," *Children's Bureau Publications,* No. 57 (Washington, D. C., 1919), pp. 37–47, 49–65.
3. See "Germany and the Childbirth Convention," *International Labor Review,* Vol. XVI, November 1927, No. 5. H. Goldschmidt, "Mothers Allowances in North America," *loc. cit.*

CHAPTER XI

THE SYSTEM OF FAMILY ALLOWANCES

THE THEORY OF A "STANDARD" FAMILY WAGE

DURING the past two decades a significant movement has originated in several European countries which has resulted in a firmly established policy of a novel character in France and Belgium. The movement had its source in the heightened appreciation on the part of a few employers of labor of the bitter struggle for existence waged by many of their employees, especially those with families of small children. Perhaps the perception of itself would not have availed much in stimulating employers to ease the heavy burdens of their married workers, but it was reinforced by a clearer understanding of the unfavorable reaction of the struggle against poverty upon the productivity of adult workers and upon the health and vigor of their children, who will be the industrial laborers of the next generation. In France, where the movement has gained much headway, it has received a powerful impetus from a declining birth rate and a high infant mortality rate. For these reasons, employers have been compelled "to allow the question of the human needs of workers and their families to intrude itself into discussions on wages." Out of these discussions has emerged the concept of a *living wage*—a sum sufficient to maintain not only a full-time male worker, but his family also. This family has come to be regarded as conforming to a general type in numbers, that is, to a purely hypothetical "normal family" of five—father, mother and three children.

Eleanor Rathbone, in her admirable book *The Disinherited Family*, has boldly challenged the existence of this supposititious "normal" or "standard" family and has brought into prominence some interesting facts. She cites the investigation made by Dr. Bowley of a large number of working-class households in five English industrial towns in order to ascertain their marital condition and the number of dependent children in each family. This was supplemented by a scrutiny of the British census reports (1911) for seven other manufacturing cities and towns. The number of workingmen about whom family particulars were thus obtained was 13,475. The facts brought out by the investigation with reference to men workers over twenty are as follows: [1]

27 per cent are bachelors or widowers without dependent children.
24.7 per cent are married couples without children or with no dependent child below fourteen.
16.6 per cent have one dependent child.
13 per cent have two dependent children.
8.8 per cent have three dependent children.
9.9 per cent have more than three dependent children (i.e. 5.5 per cent have four children; 2.8 per cent have five; 1.1 per cent have six; 4 per cent have seven; and .1 per cent eight or nine).

These figures are highly significant and could probably be pretty closely duplicated in other countries. Needless to say, if the sampling of the working population is large enough to be typical—and it would seem that it is—the existence of a "normal" or "standard" family of five is a myth, like so many other easy generalizations about social questions. It somewhat rudely upsets one of our well-rooted convictions to learn that, in England at least, nearly 52 per cent of the male workers at any given time have no dependent children under fourteen, and an additional 29.6 per cent have only one or two. On the other hand, although slightly less than 10 per cent of the workers have more than three dependent children, these children constitute *about 40 per cent* of all the child dependents. A "normal" family wage would be obviously inadequate for this group of from four to nine children to a family. Moreover, as Miss Rathbone does not fail to point out, Mr. Rowntree's investigations in York "indicated that 33 per cent of workingmen have more than three children simultaneously dependent on them during part of their married life and that if only three children were allowed for, in fixing minimum wages, 62 per cent of the children of men in receipt of such wages would be in a condition of privation for varying periods, and 54 per cent would remain in such condition for five years or more." [2]

But this is only one aspect of the question. On the basis of the figures given in the British census of 1911, Miss Rathbone estimates that there were in the working class approximately 8,360,000 adult workingmen, but only 5,300,000 wives and about 9½ or 10 million children. To assume that every one of these 8,360,000 men workers had a wife and three children would mean that there were 8,360,000 wives and 25,080-000 children. Therefore, if every adult male worker was paid on the basis of the "standard" or five-member family wage, "provision would be made for 3 million phantom wives, and for over 16 million phantom children in the families containing less than three children, while on the other hand, in families containing more than three children, those in excess of that number, over 1¼ million in all, would still remain unprovided for." [3]

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[1] Eleanor Rathbone, *The Disinherited Family: A Plea for the Endowment of the Family* (Edward Arnold & Co., London, 1924), p. 16.

[2] *Ibid.,* pp. 17–18. The quotations are by permission of the author.

Miss Rathbone's study of the problem of the family wage in Europe was followed within a year by a similar work prepared independently by Professor Paul Douglas of the University of Chicago.[4] On the basis of an extended investigation made by a group of Parisian manufacturers in 1919, Professor Douglas declares that the family of three children was characteristic of only 6.4 per cent of the married workers, who constituted 63 per cent of all the workers. A similar investigation made in 1923 disclosed that only 24.7 per cent of several hundred thousand French workers were fathers. However, this result was somewhat vitiated by the fact that women and children were included as workers. Only 11 per cent of the group had three children, while the average number of children in families having any at all was 1.65.[5]

Investigations recently made in the United States furnish valuable material concerning the composition of workingmen's families in our own country. The first, made by the United States Bureau of Labor, showed that, of 11,156 workers' families classified as "normal," [6] the family of three children characterized only 17.7 per cent of the entire number. Somewhat over two thirds of the group had less than three children and 16 per cent had more. Another very extensive investigation, of miners' families, was undertaken by the United States Coal Commission in 1923. Data were secured for 128,853 miners, of whom more than half were of foreign birth. Of this large number, 83,877 or 65.1 per cent were heads of households. The investigation revealed that

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[3] Rathbone, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

[4] Paul Douglas, *Wages and the Family* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1925).

[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 32–33.

[6] This was defined to mean a family where the husband was at work, where there was a wife and not more than five children under fourteen, and where there were no dependent lodgers, boarders, or servants.

only 15.9 per cent of these families had exactly three children, while 44.3 per cent had less, and 39.2 per cent had more. The latter percentage is unusually high, and is accounted for by the fact that foreign-born immigrants from southern, eastern and southeastern Europe have large families. Fortunately Miss Obenauer, who conducted the investigation, made a comparison of the families of native-born and foreign-born miners which brought to light some significant differences. Of the native-born families, 58.2 per cent had fewer than three children, while only 36.2 per cent of the foreign-born had less. Furthermore, only 27.1 per cent of the native-born had more than three children, as compared with 47.6 per cent of the foreign-born.[7]

Not content with the results of these investigations, Professor Douglas consulted the United States census figures for 1920. These showed that approximately 28,200,000 males were gainfully employed in 1920. If it were assumed that each of these workers had a wife and three dependent children, in accordance with the theory of the "normal" family, Professor Douglas estimated that wage payments on this basis "would have been made for 35,000,000 fictitious wives and children, even were the males to be considered as the sole supporters of the people of the country. But there were no less than 6,200,000 adult women and 6,300,000 juveniles from sixteen to twenty who were also employed. . . . To pay each of these adult males enough to maintain a family of five, while continuing to pay women and children as before, would amount to paying for approximately 48,000,000 people that did not exist." [8]

It need hardly be said that these figures do not constitute an argument against paying workers a living wage, but only against the assumption that every adult workman is supporting a family of five. The conclusion seems inescapable that any wage system which is not intelligently adjusted to the actual size of families is on the one hand wasteful, and on the other so inadequate as to work serious hardship. Not only is it true that in a considerable percentage of married workers' families there are fewer than three dependent children; it is also true that in a percentage, varying greatly in Europe and America, there are more than three.

But the question of the "standard" family wage should be viewed from another standpoint. Recent investigations have demonstrated beyond peradventure that national income could not bear the strain of paying single men, widowers, and married men with no children the same wage that is paid heads of families with four dependents. Statisticians in England and America have estimated that if the total amount of national income, over a small fixed amount, were pooled and evenly divided among all the families of the country, each would receive a very small weekly or annual increase. In the case of England, Sir Joshua Stamp, an eminent British statistician, estimates that if all incomes in excess of £250 ($1,250) were distributed, the increase per family would be only £14 (approximately $70) annually, or about five shillings weekly.[9] In the United States, where wealth is greater than in the war-exhausted countries of the Old World, there are probably localities where it is possible that a "normal family wage" could be paid to all adult male workers twenty years of age and over, as well as a living wage to adult females and to juvenile workers. For example, Douglas shows that in 1919 the city of Philadelphia could have paid such wages and still have received a return of 4.5 per cent upon the invested capital. But he is careful to point out that these facts indicate a greater capacity to pay high wages in the Quaker City than is shown by the country as a whole.[10] Furthermore, he believes that the balance left employers and the investing public is "scarcely sufficient, under capitalism, to compensate people for their savings and to reimburse businesses for losses in such less prosperous years of the business cycle as 1921 and 1922, or, under socialism, to satisfy the annual requirement for saving." [11]

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[7] See Douglas, *op. cit.*, pp. 34–37.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 38. By permission of the University of Chicago Press.

The Minimum Wage Investigation in Australia.

Australia was the first country to demonstrate that, under the present system of production, it is impossible to meet essential family needs by means of a "standard" family wage *paid to the worker as an individual.* Owing to the widespread dissatisfaction with the wage rates prevailing at the close of the war, which had not been adjusted to the tremendous rise in the cost of living, the government in 1919 appointed a commission "to inquire into the cost of living in relation to the minimum or basic wage." After a year of painstaking and thorough work, the commission made its report to the effect that the actual cost of living for a "standard" family of five varied from £5 17s. per week in Sydney to £5 6s. 2d. in Brisbane. These figures were arrived at by carefully making out family budgets, based upon existing prices, which covered the needs of a workingman, his wife and three children. The principle governing the commission in preparing these budgets was "that even the humblest worker ought to receive a wage which will afford him 'reasonable standards of comfort' in regard to 'all matters comprised in the ordinary expenditure of a household'. . . ." [12]

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[9] See Rathbone, *op. cit.,* pp. 29–38.

[10] *Ibid.,* pp. 18–19.

[11] Douglas, *op. cit.,* pp. 19–21.

The report of the commission was printed in November, 1920, and immediately thereafter the Prime Minister called upon the Commonwealth Statistician, Mr. G. H. Knibbs, to render a judgment as to the feasibility of paying a wage corresponding to the commission's findings, i.e., not less than £5 16s. weekly, to every adult male employee. The reply of Mr. Knibbs was both prompt and discouraging. He declared:

"Such a wage cannot be paid to all adult employees because the whole produced wealth of the country, including all that portion of produced wealth which now goes in the shape of profit to employers would not, if divided equally amongst employees, yield the necessary weekly amount." [13]

In the face of this pronouncement, the government naturally refused to attempt the scheme of putting into force a basic wage of £5 16s. Three weeks later, the Prime Minister, Mr. Hughes, announced that a minimum wage of £4 a week for married men in the public service, with an additional allowance of 5s. weekly for each child, would be sponsored by the government. Single men in the service of the commonwealth were to receive the same advance, minus, of course, the allowance for children. Shortly after this announcement, however, the Prime Minister departed for Europe, and no further action in this direction was taken by the Australian Parliament.[14]

As suggested above, the significance of this effort on the part of Australia is not at all in its positive accomplishment but in its demonstration of the truth of the theory, for some years known to economists and statisticians, that, *under our present system of production,* the amount of national income available for distribution in any country—even if profits be wholly wiped out—is insufficient to raise the wage of every workingman—married or single—to the level essential to maintain a worker's family of five.

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[12] Rathbone, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 178.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 184.

THE SYSTEM OF FAMILY ALLOWANCES IN FRANCE

However disheartening the facts discussed above may appear to those of us who desire to see the standard of living raised for wage-earners, it should not be assumed that nothing can be done by way of relieving the economic stress in workingmen's families. France was the first nation to point out that the problem may be attacked in another way than by State action, and can be at least partially solved without abandoning the pet principle of labor—"equal pay for equal work." This method is the system of *making grants to married workers in proportion to the number of dependent children in the family.*

Although family allowances in a rudimentary form were initiated by the railroad companies in France as early as 1890, and by the state in 1919 for its lower-paid employees in the public service, the first important movement by private employers in industry was inaugurated in 1916 by M. Romanet, managing director of a large iron manufacturing establishment in the city of Grenoble. A man of intense piety, fervent idealism, and broad vision, M. Romanet had influenced the owner of the factory, M. Joya, to attempt some experiments in industrial welfare as early as 1905. It was not until the spring of 1916, however, that the experiment of paying family allowances was launched. At a meeting of workingmen's associations, several men had complained of the heavy family burdens they were forced to carry. This led to an investigation of the households of eight employees of *Maison Joya.* M. Romanet was convinced by his inquiries that the economic situation in families with dependent children was one involving genuine hardship and often debt. Moreover, this clear-sighted idealist perceived that a rise in the wages of all employees would not meet the difficulty, since previous rises had been followed by an increase in the cost of living which, in the case of a workman with several dependent children, had considerably outrun the advance in wages. His reflections on the problem led M. Romanet to the conclusion that the payment to workingmen's families of an allowance for every child under thirteen was the only wise solution. Without much difficulty, he persuaded M. Joya to try the novel plan of family allowances (*allocations familiales*). The payments at first were on a very modest scale—7.50 francs per month for one child, eighteen francs for two children, 31.50 for three and 48 for four.

The new scheme aroused much discussion among employers and workers, and resulted in agitation on the part of employees in other metal working establishments for similar privileges. Conferences were soon arranged at which M. Romanet set forth his ideas; and in the end all the firms belonging to the engineering and metal working industries in the locality decided to pay family allowances on a scale to be agreed upon. At first a very low scale of payments was adopted, but this has been several times raised, until in 1921 it reached twenty francs per month for the first child, twenty-five francs for the second, and thirty francs for subsequent children.[15] It will readily be seen that these payments are at best very small in amount. Nevertheless they help in some measure to bridge over the difference between a very low standard of living, together with debt, on the one hand, and a minimum standard of decent living on the other.

This original scheme had not long been in operation when it became evident to the keen intelligence of M. Romanet that the employers would probably be tempted to discriminate against married men in order to avoid the cost of the allowances. He therefore hit upon the plan of inducing the employers to pool the cost of family allowances and form a general compensation fund. According to this scheme, the expense of the grants is divided among the employers according to some agreed principle—either in proportion (1) to the total number of their employees, men or women married or single; or (2) to the total amount of their wages bill. By means of this shrewd device, no employer is benefited by discriminating against married workers.

The compensation fund for family allowances (*Caisse de compensation pour allocations familiales*) began its useful work in Grenoble in May, 1918. It was anticipated by a similar experiment started at Lorient in January by the President of the Chamber of Commerce, under the control of the Alliance of Industry and Commerce. This *Caisse* was organized as a result of agitation by workers for an increase of wages.

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[15] Rathbone, *op. cit.*, pp. 195–196.

From 1918 to the present time *Caisses de compensation* have sprung up like mushroom growths from one end of France to the other. In general they have originated not with the workers, but with federations of employers or with chambers of commerce who have become convinced of their useful function and have advocated their establishment with enthusiastic conviction. At the third annual congress of the *Caisses,* held in June, 1923, the President, M. Mathon, claimed that there were affiliated to the Committee 120 *Caisses,* including 7,600 firms, and distributing in family allowances over 92 million francs annually for the direct or indirect benefit of 880,000 wage-earners. Including the great public and private bodies which administer allowances individually, he reckoned that the allowances paid amount to over 300 million francs annually and affect over 2½ million wage-earners. It has been calculated further that the system of family allowances already covers about half the industrial wage-earners of France.[16]

Since 1923 the *Caisses* have grown by leaps and bounds. At the ninth national congress of family allowances held in Tours, in May, 1929, it was reported that the affiliated funds for payment of family allowances numbered 229, covering 25,000 establishments. The workers benefiting numbered 1,740,000 and the total annual amount paid in allowances was 292,000,000 francs.[17]

State Action in Regard to Family Allowances.

State action in France with respect to family allowances developed about the same time as that of private industry. A general system for payment of family allowances to state officials was introduced in 1917 and was later extended to employees in public undertakings such as railways and mines. At present family allowances are granted to all the staffs of public administrative departments and services. In 1929 the annual allowances paid to state officials and employees were as follows: [18]

First child	604.80	Francs
Second child	806.40	"
Third child	1,209.60	"
Fourth & each subsequent child	1,411.20	"

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[16] Rathbone, *op. cit.*, pp. 197–198.

[17] "The Family Allowance System: A Survey of Recent Developments," *International Labor Review,* Vol. XXI, No. 3, March, 1930.

[18] *Loc. cit.*, p. 6.

In terms of the American dollar these allowances range in amount from $39.91 annually for the first child to $93.34 for the fourth. In American eyes these payments seem very small, but it is reported that the government proposes to increase the rates of allowances.

In 1930 the total sum distributed to workers' families through (1) equalization funds, (2) private undertakings paying family allowances on their own account, and (3) the state, amounted to 1,650,000,000 francs, and the beneficiaries numbered 4,300,000 employed persons. Such figures are impressive and testify to the determined efforts of France to raise the national birth rate by easing the pressure of the industrial system on the married worker with dependent children.[19]

But the connection of the French state with family allowances does not stop here. The government has moved step by step toward making payment of family allowances compulsory throughout the nation. In 1922 a law was enacted requiring all contractors for public works and for state building to pay family allowances to their workers and to affiliate with an approved equalization fund. In 1929 the government seriously considered the enactment of a law making family allowances a legal obligation, and a draft bill prepared by the Minister of Labor was submitted to the Superior Family Allowance Commission set up by a government decree of January 26, 1929.

The final outcome of three years of discussion and criticism of proposed bills was the law of March 11, 1932. This act provides for a national system of compulsory family allowances in France in behalf of all manual and non-manual workers of both sexes in industry, commerce, agriculture, *and the liberal professions*. The allowances are payable for every legitimate or adopted child, every illegitimate child recognized by the father, and every ward who is dependent on a worker and is below the age when compulsory school attendance ends (thirteen years, or under certain conditions, twelve years). Allowances are payable until the child reaches the age of sixteen if he continues regularly in school, or enters apprenticeship, or if, because of chronic illness, he cannot enter gainful employment. The provisions of the act will be put gradually into effect "through decrees of the Minister of Labor who will determine for each region the trades, (professions) or trade groups which, in his judgment, seem able to bear the additional expense involved in the payment of family allowances." The payments will in general be made to the wage-earner on whom the child is dependent but in certain cases they may be paid to the mother or person in charge of the child. To meet the cost of this national system of allowances every employer of manual or non-manual workers of any age or either sex must make certain payments into a compensation fund out of which the allowances will be paid.[20]

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[19] *International Survey of Social Services, International Labor Office, Studies and Reports,* Series M, No. 11, pp. 267–269.

State Assistance for Large Families.

For many years past France has been deeply concerned about its low birth rate, and even before the World War the government took the first step in the direction of encouragement to large families. The Act of July, 1913, provided that every French citizen supporting more than three children and having insufficient means for their upbringing should receive an annual allowance *for each child beyond the third* under thirteen years of age. If the children are supported by the mother alone, the assistance is given for every child under thirteen beyond the first; if by the father alone grants are made to every child under thirteen beyond the second. The cost of this assistance is shared by the communes, the departments, and the state which last assumes responsibility for the whole of the allowances up to 210 francs per child. Although the amount of the allowance is fixed for each commune by the municipal council, the sum may not fall below 270 francs. If it is above 300 francs, the excess must be met by the commune alone. In January, 1930, there were 47,763 beneficiaries of these allowances and 22,271,000 francs were distributed in benefits.

Not content with enacting the law of 1913 in assistance of large families, the French Government passed the Act of July, 1923, providing a system of further encouragement to large families. Every family of French nationality residing in France and including three or more living children, *legitimate or legitimized,* under thirteen years of age receives *from the state* a monthly allowance for each child beyond the second. Children under sixteen continuing their studies or having a written contract of apprenticeship or suffering from an incurable disease are also eligible for the grant. The amount of the state allowance, if both parents are living, is 120 francs for the first child benefiting, 360 for the second, and 540 for the third and each of the subsequent children. The law expressly stipulates that these allowances cannot be granted concurrently with family allowances paid to their staffs by the public authorities nor with assistance grants to large families, as described above. Apparently the state allowances in encouragement of large families are aiding many more persons than the assistance grants, for on December 31, 1930, there were 529,456 beneficiaries of the act. The total expenditure involved was 237,000,000 francs (about $15,642,000 at the present, 1936, value of the franc).

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[20] See *Monthly Labor Review,* April, 1932, p. 796. Based on the *Journal Officiel, Débats Parlementaire.*

A further device for encouraging larger families is the payment of "birth bonuses," provided for by the Act of June, 1918. The conditions of eligibility to receive bonuses are laid down by those communes and departments which set up birth-bonus schemes and provide for financing them. The expense is met from the departmental or communal budgets and by a subsidy from the state if the bonus is at least 100 francs. In the case of bonuses exceeding 1,000 francs the state pays only up to 1,000 francs. In 1930 the state bonus subsidy totaled 21,127,312 francs while the combined contributions of the departments and communes amounted to 28,005,970 francs.[21]

FAMILY ALLOWANCES IN OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

Before considering the effect of the family allowance system on the national birth rate in France, as well as certain eugenic questions inevitably suggested by the system, a brief survey of the establishment of family allowance systems in other countries seems desirable. In Belgium the payment of allowances was begun as a voluntary service in 1915, in a time of widespread national need. The next step was taken in 1928 when the system was made compulsory for all employers who obtained contracts from the state. In 1930 Belgium took the final step and by a national law of August 4 made the payment of allowances compulsory for *all* employers except employers of persons in their own homes, or of charwomen, or foreign sailors. Contributions are paid by the employer into "equalization pools" as in France, and are due for every man or woman employed, whether married or single. This method, of course, renders unnecessary any discrimination in employment against a married man. In addition to other funds a State Auxiliary Fund has been established to which all employers not affiliated with

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[21] *International Survey of Social Services, op. cit.,* pp. 258–260.

"equalization funds" automatically belong. As in France, so in Belgium, the allowances for each child are small. The first child receives fifteen francs a month, the second twenty francs, the third forty, the fourth seventy, the fifth and subsequent children receive one hundred francs. Allowances are paid until children are of school-leaving age but extensions of benefits are granted until the age of eighteen for children continuing their education and for child apprentices. In cases where children are incapable of working because of physical or mental infirmity allowances are granted indefinitely. They are also paid to illegitimate children of an employee if acknowledged by him. The Belgian League in Favor of Large Families has been active in furthering the system of family allowances and has advocated the continuation of payments to pensioned state servants.

The cost of allowances is met by a fixed levy on the employer of 0.60 francs a day for each male employee and 0.30 francs daily for each employed woman. An annual subsidy of 30,000,000 francs is earmarked in the state budget for the National Equalization Fund. The total amount of family allowances paid by private undertakings in 1930 was 225,000,000 francs.[22]

In Germany, as in France, the custom of paying grants to families with dependent children originated before the war. However, in Germany such payments were made only to civil service employees of the national and local governments, to agricultural workers and to the employees in an occasional industrial organization like the Zeiss optical works. During the war the practice became much more general, especially in private firms engaged in government work. Owing to the antipathy of the labor unions, however, the payment of family allowances seems to have been largely abandoned for a short period after the war. But the deplorable economic conditions in Germany soon forced a return to the practice, and for a few years most collective wage agreements contained clauses providing for family allowances. Early in 1923 the Ministry of Labor divided these agreements into three classes with respect to the payment of allowances: (1) those in which allowances are universally recognized, as in mechanical engineering, textiles, coal-mining, paper-manufacturing; (2) those about equally divided between acceptance and non-acceptance of the new scheme; (3) those where the system is not recognized.

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[22] *Ibid.,* pp. 74–76.

Germany never developed the compensation fund on the pool system to nearly the extent it has reached in France. Most allowances were paid by individual firms, and were thus open to the objection that the payments, made openly to married workers with dependent families, frequently aroused jealousy and ill-feeling on the part of unmarried employees. The first fund on the French plan for payment of family allowances was organized in Berlin by the Union of Metal Industries in 1920. Since that time such funds were instituted in Cologne, Berg, Munster, and a few other industrial cities.

In recent years the system of family allowances has declined in importance in Germany. The International Labor Office in Geneva reported in March, 1930, that the chief application of family allowances in private industry was in coal-mining. In certain districts of Germany, however, allowances were then being paid to clerical employees, and to workers in certain clothing, chemical, metal, and textile industries. In the mining industry payment of family allowances is made up of two parts: an allowance in respect of the wife or the household and allowances in respect of the children. Whether these allowances are still paid under the Nazi régime, the writer has not been able to discover. The American Consul in Vienna has recently stated that in Austria the system no longer exists.

Other European countries restrict payment of family allowances primarily to those employed in state services. The countries paying allowances to civil employees are Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and Yugoslavia. In private industry the family allowance system is applied to a limited extent in mining. In this instance the allowances are usually paid independently by individual employers, although equalization funds have been established in the Netherlands. In Italy and Switzerland family allowances are paid to all persons employed by the state ministries and by such public services as railways, posts, and telegraphs. Italy also pays allowances to employees in banking. In certain districts a few Italian industries were paying family allowances in 1930. The importance of the allowances varies greatly in the different European countries and even in different industries, but in no country has the system attained such nation-wide proportions as in France and Belgium.

In Australia the question of family allowances has been considered mainly with reference to the principle of the living wage. For years vigorous discussion has gone on as to whether the basic or living wage should be calculated so as to cover the needs of an average family (uncritically accepted as consisting of husband, wife and three children) or whether family needs should be provided for in the form of special allowances. In 1920 the Commonwealth government introduced the family allowance system for married public officials with dependent children. The fund from which endowments are paid is provided by a flat-rate deduction from the salaries of all adult male officials, married or single. The allowance is five shillings per week for each dependent child under fourteen. State officers in receipt of £500 per annum or more are not entitled to endowment. Yet each of these men, together with single men and married men without dependent children, contributes to the Commonwealth Public Service Fund about £11 per year without receiving any tangible benefit in return. In 1931 about 20,000 public servants were working under the Commonwealth Family Endowment scheme, *less than half of whom received child endowment allowances.*[23]

Unlike the other states of the Australian commonwealth, New South Wales introduced the family allowance system for benefit of workers' families with small income by passage of the Family Endowment Act in 1927. This Act has been the center of violent controversy in New South Wales. It was introduced at the same time as the new Industrial Arbitration (Living Wage Declaration) Act of 1927 which established a new unit for the fixing of the living wage. This unit was to consist of a man and wife only, whereas the wage had previously been based on the needs of a family with two children. After several changes in both the family unit and the basic wage scale the family unit was fixed in 1929 by the Parliament of New South Wales as man, wife, and one dependent child. The state adult basic wage for a male worker in 1931 was £4 2s. 6d. and provided for a man, wife, and one child. Endowments, therefore, are not paid for one dependent child in the family. An allowance is paid to the mother for each dependent child after the first at the rate of five shillings per week. If, however, the total family income reaches or exceeds the basic wage *plus* five shillings a week, no endowment is paid for the second child. The same principle holds good with respect to other children; no allowance is paid if the family income is equal to the basic wage plus five shillings or more weekly for each dependent child.

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[23] George Anderson, "Wage Rates and the Standard of Living," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* November, 1931, p. 173.

The Family Endowment Fund in New South Wales is provided by a tax on employers of one per cent on the total amount of wages paid to their employees for each quarter of the year. These contributions are paid into the fund quarterly. It is interesting to note that the definition of "employers" includes the state in connection with certain public industrial undertakings.[24]

Apart from allowances made to civil officials with children, family endowment is not provided in the remaining states of Australia. In 1928 a Royal Commission appointed by the commonwealth government to investigate the whole subject of child endowment rendered an adverse report with respect to institution of the system on the grounds (1) that it had not been established that wages were insufficient and (2) that a levy on industry to finance child endowment would have disastrous reactions.[25]

The Situation in England.

In England, owing to the marked trade stagnation prevalent after the War, wages steadily fell in some industries to a point even below the pre-war level. For several years past the Family Endowment Society, located in London, has been active in its attempts to educate public opinion and the minds of legislators to the importance of the movement for granting family allowances, and to the necessity for establishing the system in England. Particularly persuasive and convincing have been the efforts of Eleanor Rathbone, whose book on *The Disinherited Family* has so frequently been cited. In a letter to the London *Times* of March 5, 1925, Miss Rathbone suggested the appointment of a government commission "to investigate the whole vexed question of the proper basis of wages—whether it should be influenced by or based on cost of living, and if so, whether the cost should be that of an imaginary 'normal family' or should provide for actual families through the allowance system." Unfortunately nothing of importance has resulted from the enlightened efforts of the Family Endowment Society.

When we turn to the United States, perhaps the country of all others most wedded to social *laissez faire*, it may be said that the question of family endowment has scarcely been raised here, much less made a live controversial issue as in England. Yet a few isolated instances of payment of family allowances exist in this country. Prominent among these are grants to officers of the army and navy of the United States. By an act of June 10, 1922, the Congress provided that, as a measure of expediency only, to enable the navy personnel to support their families in a period of rising prices, a system of allowances for dependents should be instituted. A "dependent" is defined as a wife, child, or dependent mother. An officer in the navy must prove to the satisfaction of the Comptroller General that his mother is in reality wholly dependent upon him; therefore, each such case is judged on its merits.

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[24] *Loc. cit.*, p. 173.

[25] Anderson, *loc. cit.*, p. 172.

Naval officers with one or more dependents receive, in addition to salary, a larger allowance for both rental and subsistence than do single officers without dependents. The rental allowances for officers with dependents range from $1,440 for commanders to $1,262 for admirals and captains with more than twenty-six years service, whereas the same allowance for officers without dependents is $960 annually. Naval officers with even one dependent, therefore, receive from $362 to $540 more as rental allowance than do officers without dependents. In addition an officer with one or more dependents receives a "subsistence allowance," which ranges from $219 to $438 more than is received by a naval officer without dependents. This means that an officer on the highest pay level may receive $978 a year more than one at the lowest level. A similar system of allowances has been set up in the army.[26]

Great dissatisfaction with the payment of these family allowances has been expressed by the personnel of the two government services. Indeed the system of allowances has been recommended for discontinuance, as it is held that an officer's compensation should be commensurate with his rank, responsibility, and value to the government and should be sufficient to enable him to support his dependents. As the system now works, a junior officer with one dependent may receive more in salary plus allowances than his senior officer with no dependent mother, wife, or children.

Other organizations in the United States which provide family allowances are the foreign missionary societies with married workers living in a number of foreign fields. Only one industrial corporation in the country has set up a system of family allowance payments and that is the Columbia Conserve Company of Indianapolis, Indiana. In this company, a wage of 50 per cent above the rate paid to single men is granted to married men. That is, a married man received in 1929 $33 a week and an unmarried man $22 weekly. In addition $2 per child per week was paid up to a maximum of $6.00 weekly. At present these allowances have been reduced to 60 per cent of the amounts paid in 1929. The effect of the system upon the morale of the workers is said by an officer of the company to be excellent.

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[26] These facts refer to the year 1929. The writer has not been able to secure from the Chief of the Bureau of Navigation in Washington more recent figures.

There remains but one more example of the use of the family allowance system in this country that the author has been able to discover. This is Wells College, Aurora, New York. In this institution any member of the faculty who is married and supporting a family will receive, in addition to a fixed annual salary, one thousand dollars for a spouse and two hundred fifty dollars for each dependent child under twenty-one. No distinction of sex is made in the application of this law. In 1933–1934, however, there was no married woman with dependents on the faculty to claim the allowances. The plan was put into operation about 1924 and is described by the president as "decidedly successful."

EFFECTS OF THE FAMILY ALLOWANCE SYSTEM

When the national system of family allowances is viewed critically with respect to its results, the first question that suggests itself is: What is the effect upon the national birth rate? In France a report on the effects of the system was made to the Family Allowance Congress in 1929 by Colonel Guillermin, Director of the Lyons Family Allowance Fund. The findings were based on data from 142 funds. These data show that the number of children, for approximately the same number of families, rose from 410,677 in 1926 to 525,509 in 1928, an increase of 27 per cent, as against an increase of 19 per cent between 1924 and 1926. The percentage distribution of families according to the number of children had also changed in favor of larger families. The percentage of families with three children rose from 10.95 in 1926 to 11.35 in 1928; and the percentage of families with five or more children rose from 2.59 in 1926 to 2.98 in 1928. The birth rate among the workers covered by forty-six funds[27] was 4.49 per hundred in

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[27] A small proportion of the total number of funds.

1928. On the basis of rates compiled by the Ministry of Labor for the whole of France, the Director's report estimated the birth rate in 1928 of the general population between fifteen and sixty years of age (i.e., of similar age to that of the workers covered by the funds) at 2.89 per hundred. If the estimate is correct, the birth rate among the working population receiving family allowances was in 1929 more than 50 per cent greater than that of the population in general in the previous year. Moreover, infant mortality was reported to be markedly less among workers on the funds than in the population at large. Information collected by several large funds in Belgium shows similar results.

On the basis of these reports it would seem that definite advance had been made in both France and Belgium toward achieving one of the primary ends in view in the establishment of national family allowance systems, namely, raising the low birth rates of the two countries. Yet recent figures do not support this conclusion, even though family allowances have been placed upon a national basis for nearly six years in Belgium and for four years in France. In a recent issue of the *Review for the Increase of the French Population* an article by M. Fernand Boverat states that only thirteen out of the ninety departments of France have a surplus of births over deaths.[28] Certainly no encouragement is afforded the French government by the birth rates in 1933 and 1934 which are respectively 16.3 and 16.1—among the lowest in Europe. In 1935 the mortality in France considerably exceeded the births which were markedly lower than in the preceding year.[29] The Belgian birth rate, likewise, has been steadily falling from 18.4 in 1928 to 17.7 in 1932 and 16.6 in 1933.[30]

It can hardly be maintained, then, that the family allowance system, even when made obligatory as in France and Belgium, has had as yet the effect of increasing national birth rates or even of stemming their decline. Nor is the situation different in Australia where birth rates have fallen sharply since 1928, from an average of 21 in 1926 to 1930, to 16.8 in 1933, and to a provisional rate of 16.4 in 1934.[31]

Certain eugenic questions challenge consideration in attempting to estimate the social value of the family allowance system. Unquestionably the primary purpose of industrial employers in the payment of allowances to families with children was to relieve economic hardship and assure better nurture to the offspring of workingmen. With the exception of the allowances paid certain state servants in France since 1917, the system of family allowances, in the early years of its history, did not render it more feasible for educated men to rear larger families. Interest at first was concentrated on improving the lot of workers' families. Some years later, however, when the governments of France and Belgium became concerned about declining birth rates, the benefits of family allowances were extended to ever-enlarging groups, first to all state officials in the ministries, then to skilled employees in the state posts, telegraphs and railways, finally, by the act of 1930 in Belgium and 1932 in France, to all employed persons in the nation. By these recent laws, the benefits of family allowances have been extended to *salaried employees in the liberal professions*. This feature of the law seems potentially of eugenic importance, if, indeed, it be true, as evidence seems to show, that the offspring of professional persons are among the most gifted in the community. Similarly, the establishment of the family allowance system in many other European countries for the benefit of all state servants, including those employed in the various ministries, enables these educated and skilled workers to rear their families in greater comfort. But the crucial question for eugenists is whether the payment of allowances actually encourages these state employees to have more children. This does not seem to be borne out by birth rate statistics.

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[28] New York *Times,* April 22, 1934.

[29] New York *Times,* May 14, 1936.

[30] Figures obtained from the *Statistical Yearbook of the League of Nations,* 1934–1935.

[31] *Ibid.*

Will the United States in the years to come include family allowances within the purview of its social plans? As yet the question has not even been mooted in this country, although it has been the subject of vigorous controversy in England for a decade or more. If our country does, in course of time, give consideration to this policy, it will be confronted with certain clear-cut problems. Shall payment of family allowances be considered as a humane measure for the relief of economic distress and thus restricted to the lowest income groups? Or shall allowances be viewed solely from a eugenic standpoint and paid only to families able to meet high standards of physical vigor and mental endowment, but with incomes adequate only for the rearing of small families? The former policy would outrage all the convictions of the eugenist by encouraging larger families in precisely the group already held to be thoughtlessly prolific. The latter policy would be essentially undemocratic. A further possible course may be suggested. As in France and Belgium, employers may be compelled to pay allowances to workers in all trades and professions; but the allowances may be proportioned to the wage or salary received. Such a scheme might prove a distinct encouragement to professional employees and those in the more skilled and responsible posts in commerce and industry to have larger families while not lending such encouragement to unskilled wage-earners. In the words of Professor MacDougall: "A widespread scheme of family allowances may . . . be highly dysgenic or powerfully eugenic: and the essential difference between a dysgenic and a eugenic system is that in the former the allowance is made according to a flat rate, the same for all; while in the eugenic system the amount of the allowance per child is proportional to the wages or salary of the parent." [32] This statement may be entirely authentic; yet it is well to bear in mind that the superior talents of the privileged groups have not been conclusively demonstrated to be wholly, or even preponderantly, the result of innate ability apart from advantageous nurture and education.

A final question that may well be asked is, what will be the effect of the various forms of maternity and child aid in different countries upon the influx of married women into industry? Conceivably, if the financial aid is substantial enough, it may stem that ever-swelling tide of mothers into gainful occupations, put them back into the home, and set them once more to work at domestic tasks. Would this be pure gain? It is difficult to say. Certainly nothing can be more crushing than the load of toil borne by those mothers who are carrying on two occupations—wage-earning and home work. To relieve working women of that double burden would be a humane accomplishment. On the other hand, the testimony of social workers and nurses should not be ignored to the effect that in any considerable group of wage-earning mothers there is always a percentage of women, usually rather small, who actively dislike housekeeping and the physical care of children and perform these tasks very indifferently, if not badly. These women languish in the unsocial atmosphere of the home, and go about their duties with a sense of lonely distaste. As they well know, in the factory, the store, the laundry, they would meet other women and have some opportunity for the social interchange that they crave. Moreover, this group values the sense of economic independence that is the result of wage-earning and also enjoys spending its earnings in buying comforts and necessities for the children. The payment of family allowances might in time have the effect of holding these women down closely to the performance of household tasks as a condition of receiving the grant, and thus unduly restricting their freedom to choose an occupation. For this group, the only way out seems to lie, not in the payment of allowances, but in the establishment of a much greater number of day nurseries, nursery schools, supervised playgrounds, and community kitchens and laundries under private or public management, than now exist. This is only to say that society, having embarked upon the course of helping mothers with dependent little children, may be compelled by the course of events to become more and more responsive to a variety of different needs, inhering in diverse groups. He would be a bold prophet who would venture to foretell with confidence what will be the future outcome of this policy of social aid to the family upon which western states have embarked. It may be suggested, however, that the Russian Soviet Republic is showing the way.

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[32] "Family Allowances as a Eugenic Measure," *Character and Personality,* December, 1933, p. 114.

TOPICS FOR REPORTS

1. The Case of the Opposition to Family Allowances: Can Their Arguments Be Met?
   Eleanor Rathbone, *The Disinherited Family: A Plea for the Endowment of the Family* (Edward Arnold & Co., London, 1924), Ch. VI.
2. Conditions of a Workable National Scheme of Family Allowances.
   Ibid., Ch. VII.
3. Wages and the "Typical" Family of Five.
   Paul Douglas, *Wages and the Family* (University of Chicago Press, 1925), Chs. II, III.
4. Pros and Cons with Regard to Family Allowances.
   Mary T. Waggaman, "Family Allowances in Foreign Countries," *Bulletin of United States Bureau of Labor Statistics,* No. 401 (1926), pp. 52–105.
5. Public Aid to Families in Soviet Russia.
   Susan M. Kingsbury, and Mildred Fairchild, *Factory, Family and Woman,* (G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1935), Chs. VIII, XII–XIV.

CHAPTER XII

THE MARRIAGE RATE AMONG COLLEGE GRADUATES

CIVILIZATION AND A DECLINING MARRIAGE RATE

IT is a fairly well established fact that a positive correlation exists between a highly developed civilization and a low birth rate; but the evidence of a similar correlation between culture and the marriage rate is not so clear. Our knowledge of society in the Orient lends no support to the theory, but there is ample evidence in its support in the case of the Roman Empire. Here the proofs are abundant and unequivocal to the effect that, hand in hand with the progress of culture, the spread of wealth and luxury, and the development of higher education, in which patrician women shared, there went a continuous decline in the marriage rate. So unpopular did marriage, with its attendant family responsibilities, become in Rome that government officials were seriously disturbed by the problem and Augustus Cæsar, as we have seen, penalized celibacy by statute.[1] There is no reason to believe, however, that the financial penalties which he attached to the single state accomplished the much-desired end of inducing men to seek wives. On the contrary, Tacitus informs us, nearly a century after the passage of the law, that "Marriages and the rearing of children did not become more frequent, so powerful were the attractions of a childless state."[2]

For several centuries after the advent of Christianity, there was little or no improvement in the marriage rate in Rome; probably there was a further decline, owing to the widespread influence of asceticism, with its gospel of disciplinary repression of all bodily desires, especially the sex impulse. But, following upon the successive inroads of barbarian hordes into the confines of the Empire, and the continuous decline of culture, the ideas of the Goths, Vandals, Huns and Lombards gradually came to prevail over Roman customs in regard to the duty of marriage. With the reversion of western Europe to barbarism went the loss of the accumulated knowledge and control of natural forces on which Rome had built her mighty empire. Cities decayed or disappeared, and the functions of government and law were relegated once more to the "great family" or kinship group. Life was reduced almost to its simplest terms, and was characterized by a never-ending struggle, on the one hand with natural forces, on the other with marauding foes. Under these conditions, marriage and the bearing of offspring to recruit a constantly depleted race became a paramount social duty enforced by the tremendous pressure of public opinion and the mores. These sanctions, reinforced in later centuries by the Church, art and literature, served to keep the marriage rate and birth rate high until after the middle of the nineteenth century. But the profound economic and social changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution, the extension of educational opportunities, and the spread of individualistic ideas since the eighteenth century, have once more resulted in creating for modern states a problem with respect to the marriage rate similar to that which confronted Imperial Rome. The development of civilization means expanding knowledge and control of material things and forces, increase in wealth, growth of a leisure class with time and means for cultivation of the mind and spirit. With higher culture goes increased individualization, an enhanced sense of personal rights and of the value and importance of the individual life. The cultured man or woman finds on every hand stimulating interests and activities with which to enrich his days; and unless his personal education has included the development of social interests and a sense of social responsibility he may, and sometimes does, elect to live a purely individualistic life, exempt from the burdensome cares entailed by marriage and children. Hence a relatively low marriage rate in this group.

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[1] See *ante,* p. 47.

[2] *Annals* (translated by Church and Brodribb) (Macmillan Co., Ltd., London, 1906), Vol. VIII, p. 25.

IS THERE A MARRIAGE DECLINE IN THE UNITED STATES?

At this point it is pertinent to ask whether a decline in the marriage rate is characteristic of the United States as it is of certain European countries. A study of the census reports shows that there has been a small but continuous increase in the proportion of both married men and women since 1890. If we select the age-groups from twenty-five to forty-four years, and compare the percentage of males and females married in 1900, 1910, 1920, and 1930, we get the following results:

Age-Group	*Percentage of Males Married*	*Date*
25–34	68.4	1930
	65.6	1920
	62.8	1910
	60.6	1900
35–44	81.5	1930
	79.8	1920
	79.2	1910
	78.8	1900

Age-Group	*Percentage of Females Married*	*Date*
25–34	77.7	1930
	76.5	1920
	75.1	1910
	73.0	1900
35–44	81.5	1930
	80.3	1920
	80.1	1910
	79.5	1900

The census of 1930, however, shows a decline in the number of marriages reported (when compared with the preceding year) in four particular years since 1923—in 1924, 1927, 1928, and 1930. These declines, however, are slight except in 1930—a depression year. Similar decreases in number of marriages are recorded in 1931 and 1932, amounting in percentages to 5.9 and 7.4 respectively. Unquestionably these recent declines are the result of an economic depression of unparalleled length and severity. It is a well-known fact that the marriage rate quickly responds to economic conditions. Probably these marriage decreases would not have occurred if "prosperity" had been normal.

If, now, we ask whether the *age* of marriage has risen during the last two decades, the census is no less explicit in its answer. Not only were there proportionately more females married at the age of nineteen years in 1920 than in 1910 (the percentages are respectively 28.6 and 25.7), but *at every age,* from fifteen to twenty years, proportionately more girls were married in 1920 than in 1910.[3] In 1930, however, the percentages of males married between fifteen and nineteen showed a slight decrease when compared with 1920 while the percentages of females remained almost the same.

[3] *United States Census for 1920,* Vol. II. "Population."

May we then sit back complacently and declare that there is no marriage problem in America? Not at all. Despite the undoubted fact of a steady rise in the national marriage rate, except in recent years, and an increase in marriages at an early age up to 1930, it remains true that America, like England, has a marriage problem. It is concerned with the falling off in the number of marriages among the so-called "superior" class, by which is meant the prosperous, intelligent, upper-middle class which recruits the professions. For more than a generation, the decline in both the marriage rate and the birth rate in this social grouping has given concern to eugenists and social investigators.

THE MARRIAGE DECREASE AMONG COLLEGE GRADUATES

Since a large proportion of men and women in this superior middle class are college graduates, a study of the marriage rates in this selected group will prove rewarding. Numerous investigations of this question have been made from time to time during the past twenty-five years by alarmed geneticists and others, and in no instance are the results encouraging save in the single case of the State agricultural colleges. In an article in the *Journal of Heredity* for April, 1915, Sprague shows that only 53 per cent of Vassar graduates of the classes 1867–1892 were married in 1915, from twenty-three to forty-eight years after graduation! Nor do the Wellesley records make a better showing. Of the 528 alumnæ of the early classes from 1875 to 1889, only 50 per cent were married in 1915, from twenty-six to forty years after graduation.[4] Similar doleful figures have been gathered by G. Stanley Hall and Theodate Smith for Vassar, Smith, and Wellesley. Smith College revealed much the same condition with respect to the marriage of its alumnæ as its sister institutions. Only 42.7 per cent of Smith graduates of the classes 1879–1888 were married in 1903, from fifteen to twenty-four years after graduation. Of the classes 1889–1898, only 28.35 per cent were married from five to fourteen years after leaving college.[5] In 1918, the *Journal of the Association of Collegiate Alumnæ* published the results secured by Mary Van Kleeck and others from nine educational institutions in the East—eight women's colleges, namely, Barnard, Bryn Mawr, Mt. Holyoke, Radcliffe, Smith, Vassar,

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[4] *Loc. cit.*, p. 161.

[5] "Marriage and Fecundity of College Men and Women," *Pedagogical Seminary and Journal of Genetic Psychology*, Vol. X, March, 1903, pp. 375–414 (Clark University, Worcester, Massachusetts).

Wellesley, and Wells, and one coëducational university, Cornell. Of the 23,582 graduates of these colleges living in 1914, a high percentage (71 per cent) returned records on which the study is based. These records of 16,739 graduates show that only 39.1 per cent were married. In interpreting this result, of course, it is necessary to keep in mind that *all* graduates were included in the study. The most recent classes are numerically the largest, and are also the ones where the number of marriages is lowest, since these classes are composed of the younger women. When the graduates of the last five classes (1910–1914) were excluded, the percentage of married graduates rose to 48.2; and when all graduates subsequent to 1900 were eliminated, the percentage married was 51.

At this point it might be objected with justice that the colleges thus far investigated, with the single exception of Cornell, are Eastern women's colleges where girls are pretty thoroughly shut off from the society of young men during their most romantic years. This suggests the need of an investigation of the marriage rates in the great coëducational universities. Fortunately such a study was undertaken by Price in 1916, and the results were published in the *Journal of Heredity* the following year.[6] The figures which follow furnish no ground for undue optimism on the part of those men and women who regard the low percentage of marriages among the most intelligent of our youth as a social disaster.

It will be seen that, with the exception of Oberlin, the marriage rates over a period from ten to fifty-five years after graduation (varying with the university) do not exceed fifty-four per cent. Only the agricultural colleges show a high percentage of marriages. In Kansas Agricultural College, for example 67.6 per cent of the graduates of classes from 1885 to 1905 were married in 1916. In Iowa State College, 72.7 per cent of the graduates of classes from 1872 to 1905 were married in

Institution	*Period*	*Per cent of Women Graduates Married in 1916*
Oberlin	1850–1905	65.2
Ohio State	1885–1905	54.0
Wisconsin	1870–1905	51.8
Illinois	1880–1905	54.0

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[6] *Loc. cit.*, Vol. VIII, January, 1917, pp. 43–45.

1916. This high marriage rate is, of course, explained by the fact that the young women and men who elect to obtain their higher education in these State colleges, which furnish intensive training in agriculture and domestic science, are quite frankly looking forward to marriage and farm life.

But what are the marital records of college men? It must be admitted that, although the marriage rate in this selected group has fallen, it is by no means so low as that of college women. A study made in 1917 of the marriage rate in Stanford University[7] showed that, of 1,000 graduates in the classes from 1892 to 1900, 670 men and 330 women, 73.2 per cent of the men were married, and only 48.5 per cent of the women. Further investigations made by Banker of the percentage of the men and women graduates of Syracuse University who were married in 1917 bear out the fact that the marriage rate among college men is markedly higher than that among college women. The figures follow:[8]

Classes	*Women*	*Men*
1862–1871	87	87
1872–1881	81	90
1882–1891	55	84
1892–1901	48	73

What of marriage rates at Harvard and Yale? Phillips's study of marriage and birth rates among the graduates of these universities in the classes 1851 to 1860 showed for Harvard an average of 74 per cent of married graduates. For Yale the corresponding average was 78 per cent. This means, of course, that in 1916, the year of publication of the study, 26 per cent of elderly Harvard graduates were unmarried, and 22 per cent of Yale graduates were bachelors.[9] An investigation of more than 5,000 Harvard graduates of the classes 1891 to 1900 made by Phillips ten years later showed that 77 per cent of the number were married.[10]

These marriage percentages, for both men and women, are low when compared with those of similar age-groups in the country at large.

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[7] *Journal of Heredity,* Vol. VIII, April, 1917.

[8] *Loc. cit.,* Vol. VIII, May, 1917.

[9] John C. Phillips, "Study of the Birth-Rate in Harvard and Yale Graduates," *Harvard Graduates Magazine,* Vol. XXV, September, 1916, pp. 25–34.

[10] "Further Studies of the Harvard Birth Rate," *Harvard Graduates Magazine,* Vol. XXXIV, March, 1926, pp. 285–394.

Recent Rise in Marriages Among Graduates of Women's Colleges.

During the past ten years there has occurred an interesting rise in the percentage of married graduates of women's colleges which is a little difficult to explain. At Smith College a study was made in 1931 of 7,869 graduates who responded to a questionnaire. Sixty per cent of these women were married. More significant is the fact that whereas only 50 per cent of the graduates of classes of 1885–1888 were married, 67 per cent of the 1921–1924 group were married.[11] Similarly, the percentage of married alumnæ at Vassar has risen steadily from 53.2 for the classes 1892–1896 to 72.5 for the classes 1912–1916.[12] Since 1916, however, the percentage has fallen to 62.95 per cent, but remains distinctly higher than for the earlier classes. Of the classes 1910–1916 at Wellesley 60 per cent of the alumnæ are married, as compared with 47 per cent of the classes of 1879–1899. At Barnard the percentage of married graduates of classes 1893–1919 has risen to 56. Only Bryn Mawr, Mount Holyoke, and Radcliffe still show marriage percentages hovering about 50 per cent, or below.

Eugenists have repeatedly charged that the character of the higher education given to women, especially in the Eastern women's colleges, is largely responsible for the small percentage of marriages among them. But this theory has by no means been established. Merely to pile up statistics of low marriage rates among college and university women does not prove that higher education must shoulder most of the blame for this state of affairs. As an astute critic has pointed out, it is quite conceivable that the type of girl who goes to college places intellectual interests above the attentions of the male sex, and, if she found congenial work, might not marry if she never entered a college hall. But this is not all. College and university education cannot fairly be indicted until the marriage rates of college women are compared with those of their sisters, cousins, and friends of the same social group. To say that the percentage of college women who marry before forty-five is strikingly lower than that of women in the country at large gets us nowhere because we are comparing unequal groups. There is urgent need of a thorough, comprehensive study of the marriage rates of an equal number of college and non-college women of the same social class and age-group. Until such an investigation is undertaken it seems idle to pile Ossa upon Pelion in the matter of statistics.

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[11] *Smith Alumnæ Quarterly*, July, 1931, p. 408.

[12] *Vassar Quarterly*, May, 1931.

Causes of the Marriage Decrease in the Educated Group.

Many discussions of the falling marriage rate among college men and women are characterized by somewhat more heat than light. There is a very general disposition to lay the onus of responsibility for the situation at the door of the woman. When it is recalled, however, that, until recent years, social conventions the world over forbade women to take the initiative in securing mates, and enjoined them to refrain from showing by word or look any affection for men who had not declared love for them, the matter takes on a different complexion. It is difficult to see why most of the blame should be shouldered by the sex to whom tradition has assigned the passive rôle in mating. As one indignant woman writes, in response to criticisms of the small number of college women who marry, "The authors of such articles do not suggest—I have never seen one that did—that a woman cannot marry alone, nor even produce children by herself." [13] If the taboo against a respectable girl's taking the initiative equally with the man in the game of becoming better acquainted, falling in love, and marrying were once removed, leaving no reproachful shadow behind, the curve of the marriage rate might take a turn upward. But, certainly, the prohibition will not disappear until many more women achieve economic independence and show a firm resolve to stand on their own feet, in a financial sense, after marriage. For the roots of the taboo reach deep down into economic causes. So long as the woman at marriage ceases to engage in gainful employment and looks to her husband for her support, so long as she is dependent upon him for the necessities and comforts of life, she is restrained from openly and frankly seeking him as her mate with the same freedom that he seeks her.

But the limitation put upon young women in the matter of securing husbands is, of course, only one factor in the low marriage rate among them. The fundamental cause is probably the fact that education and professional work individualize women precisely as they individualize their brothers. A talented, highly developed young woman, who has tested and proved her abilities in a chosen career, and who finds life opening up before her avenues of broadening opportunity and usefulness, will sometimes reflect twice before she marries. And this for several reasons. In the first place, she has probably formed an ideal of love and marriage based upon equality and comradeship which her suitor does not meet. A hundred years ago, or even fifty, she would have compromised with that ideal in order to escape the stigma of being an old maid, whom everybody regarded as a social failure. But in this day and generation, the social pressure pushing women into marriage is enormously lessened. Instead of lowering her standards, she can continue to work, to hope for a lover who is also a comrade and to look the world bravely in the face as only the independent human being can do.

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[13] Laura Lockwood, "College Women as Wives and Mothers," *School and Society*, Vol. III, March 4, 1916, p. 334.

Again, the college-bred girl who is establishing herself in a congenial profession will think long before she renounces its spiritual as well as material rewards to keep house, even for the man she loves. This may be deplorable, but it is none the less a situation which is to be met on every hand. A case of this kind has been brought to the attention of the writer. A young man and woman, both members of the faculty of a State college in the Middle West, were contemplating marriage. They were deeply in love with each other and the man was eager to be married and establish a home. So, too, was the woman, but she was held back by the knowledge that, in accordance with the statutes of the college, she must give up her pleasant and lucrative position as soon as she married. Very clearly she envisaged all the consequences that her resignation entailed. She must abandon work of absorbing interest, to prepare for which she had devoted years to professional training, and must settle down in a small middle-western town to being Mr ——'s wife. Her experience would henceforth be determined by Main Street psychology and conventions. There would be few broadening interests in her life, a minimum of stimulus and challenge to her developed powers. As she faced this situation in all its stultifying reality, she naturally quailed, and was plunged into an agony of indecision from which she could not extricate herself.

In the end the couple married and the woman accepted a responsible position in a Government bureau in Washington. Needless to say, this young woman epitomizes in her own life the difficult situation in which thousands of educated women find themselves. Surely it is not to be wondered at if some of them choose stimulating work at the expense of love and home, and refuse to marry. Until some way is found of reconciling an educated woman's desire for love and offspring with her desire for self-expressive and self-developing activity, which moreover probably brings her the blessed boon of financial independence, the marriage rate among college women will be low. This is one of the outcomes of modern individualism, i.e., of the sense of personal worth, personal possibilities of achievement, and a conviction of the right of every human being to conditions of life in which he or she may thrive, develop his abilities, and be happy. The attitude is no more characteristic of educated women than of men—indeed it is less so, for women are still strongly influenced by the ancient mores which decree that home-making and motherhood are their natural sphere. Nor is this spirit by any means wholly selfish. Thousands of young women have had several years of opportunity to try their mettle in the professions, before the opportunity of marriage comes to them, and they *know* that their work as teachers, public health nurses, trained economists, personnel managers, health directors in factories and stores has positive social value.

Other causes are at work to bring about a small percentage of marriages among educated women. College women, in their friendly contacts with men, are not slow to see that underneath all the well-bred chivalry of their male associates lurks the old idea of woman's inferiority, dependence, and subordination. Few young men honestly look upon women as their equals, intellectually or in any other sense. Few have any real appreciation of the individuality of the girls in whom they are becoming interested, or of the women they have taken to wife. Still less are they concerned to prevent the cramping and suppression of that individuality. Women are still considered *en masse* by most men, who continue to talk and think about "Woman" and her biological functions, as if no individualizing of the feminine half of humanity had ever taken place. This attitude will disappear very slowly, even among highly intelligent men, for its roots rest deep in social custom. Unquestionably, it must be reckoned with as one factor making college women cautious in entering into the bonds of matrimony. To give up not only financial independence but no small degree of personal freedom and consideration as an individual, whose ideas, interests, and projects are worthy of respect, is more than many college women are willing to do. So they turn their backs on matrimony, sometimes, no doubt, with deep regret, and choose agreeable work carrying with it personal independence. Even the eugenists who are most critical of superior women for their failure to marry admit that men need to change their basic attitudes toward women. Thus Popenoe and Johnson declare: "Men should be taught greater respect for the individuality of women, so that no high-minded girl will shrink from marriage with the idea that it means a surrender of her personality and a state of domestic servitude. A more discriminating idea of sex-equality is desirable, and a recognition by men that women are not necessarily creatures of inferior mentality." [14]

Another important cause of the low marriage rate among college women lies in the fact that too often, when they take up some vocation after graduation, they find themselves in semi-social isolation, meeting congenial women, perhaps, but few men. This is a serious social problem. If it be socially desirable that women of superior intelligence and education should marry, some way must be found to increase their opportunities of meeting agreeable men of their own intellectual level. Quite commonly this question meets with indifference on the part of men and women who do not appreciate its importance, if indeed, it does not stir their risibilities. Yet it is far from a negligible or laughing matter, as many a young woman (and man as well) starting out in a vocation in a strange city has declared. It has not escaped the attention of social writers, who urge that parents and social organizations seek by every legitimate means to bring young men and women together in friendly association under suitable supervision.

The woman's college has been charged with failure to make young women desirous of having homes of their own and of managing them efficiently. "The very proper preference in many intelligent men," write Johnson and Stutzman, "for girls trained to be efficient wives and mothers is one of the causes of the low marriage rate and late time of marriage of the graduates of the women's colleges. The trained girl can and will marry a man with an income too restricted for the support of an inefficient wife." [15] Therefore the woman's college has long been the target of bitter criticism on the part of biologists for its "stubborn resistance . . . to the introduction of education for domestic efficiency, especially in the care of the infant." [16] Obviously, such comments quite overlook the fact that all women are not alike; that many girls attending liberal arts colleges are already interested in some field of work for which they are preparing themselves. To compel these young women to crowd into their college courses in sciences, economics, languages, or mathematics, some of which serve as essential preparation for a profession, extra courses in the domestic arts, child hygiene, and child psychology seems a procedure open to grave objection. This is not to say that these latter subjects are not valuable and important. They surely are. But in view of the fact that a considerable percentage of college women do not marry, why should this group be forced to pursue subjects they may never use? Even if the introduction of such practical domestic courses did appreciably raise the marriage rate (which in the judgment of the writer is highly doubtful), it would not thereby justify making these courses *compulsory* for all women. Not only would this procedure work an injustice on the group who will not marry in any case, but it is exceedingly doubtful whether such subjects would contribute as usefully to efficient home management and child care five or ten years after graduation, when the woman marries, as they would if taken when the need for such training is felt. Every city and town should offer well-planned, scientific courses in subjects relating to home management and the nurture of children, free to all young women expecting to marry, and to all married women who wish to become more efficient mothers and home-makers. Such a plan has been adopted in the agricultural state of Denmark, where home economics courses are widely established and offer intensive work to young women about to be married.

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[14] P. B. Popenoe and R. H. Johnson, *Applied Eugenics* (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1923), pp. 252–253. By permission.

[15] Johnson, R. H., and Stutzman, Bertha, "Wellesley's Birth Rate," *Journal of Heredity,* June, 1915, p. 252.

As already intimated, the entire responsibility for the low marriage rate of college women cannot justly be placed on higher education. After all, college women, like others, must wait to be asked in marriage, and men have their reasons for remaining single as well as women. Neither men nor women who have had four pleasant years in college are desirous of lowering their standards of living very materially, even for the sake of living together. No doubt certain classes of Americans need simpler standards of living, but exhortations will probably accomplish little in inducing young persons to live in small, low-priced apartments in our large cities, deficient in light and air, when they have been accustomed to cheerful, comfortable homes. This is not to say that many would not be willing to give up luxuries, such as motor cars and fur coats, in order to marry, but merely to state that, as a class, college men and women rebel against beginning life together in dingy, uncomfortable surroundings. And this is what many young persons would be forced to do if they married in the twenties on the salary most young men are earning at that age. On the other hand, if the man himself and his social group were willing to accept as a matter of course the idea that his wife should continue her lucrative employment after marriage, at least in the early years of the marriage, the difficulty would largely disappear. Many a man would not hesitate years to ask the girl he loves to share life with him, if he knew that she would contribute her part to the family income with no penalty of social criticism visited upon them both. If signs do not fail, marriage will tend to become for the educated group more of an economic partnership as well as a partnership in love, in home-making, and in the rearing of children. This idea is vigorously espoused by a male contributor to the *Woman Citizen:*

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[16] Johnson and Stutzman, *loc. cit.*

> The economic dependence of wives causes several great evils:
>
> (1) It leads to abnormally late marriages, or celibacy, because of the urban cost of living. Our rural grandmothers made dozens of food products which, in these days, must be purchased. Wives were an asset then and a liability now. "Proposing" is a costly business. The remedy is: Two for the money and two for the show.[17]

Of course, financial considerations are not the only reasons why young men are not seeking college women as wives. They know that the conceptions of love and the marriage relation held by most of these women are high—higher than they care to measure up to. So they seek less exacting mates who have no clear-cut ideas about marriage as equal comradeship, as a sharing of thoughts and experiences, of large purposes and plans, as well as of emotions.

No doubt Popenoe and Johnson are correct in ascribing to men other reasons for not marrying. They mention as causes the cultivation by men "of a taste for sexual variety and a consequent unwillingness to submit to the restraints of marriage"; pessimism about women due to early and harmful sex experiences; infection by venereal disease; mental and physical deficiencies which make mating difficult; and the ardent pursuit of business or professional ends, which makes the sacrifice of freedom and money necessary to marriage seem altogether unpalatable.[18]

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[17] "What Is a Good Wife?" *Woman Citizen,* January, 1926, p. 18.

IS THE LOW MARRIAGE RATE OF THE EDUCATED GROUP NECESSARILY A SOCIAL EVIL?

I. *The View That Celibacy among College Women Is Not Socially Disadvantageous.*

On this important question there seems to be a division of opinion among social writers. One not inconsiderable group holds the view that college women probably represent a highly intellectualized group of low fecundity, and therefore would not be fertile mothers even if they did marry. From this standpoint, society loses little, even if the marriage rate remains low in this group. This theory harks back to the view of Herbert Spencer, and a few more recent writers, that high individuation, the product of culture, is accompanied by low fertility. The theory has never been scientifically established, and its validity is positively denied by most contemporary biologists and eugenists.

One or two other theories which minimize the social importance of a higher marriage rate for college women may be briefly considered. Gardner suggests[19] that there "have been too many altogether lovely mothers without culture to warrant any presumption in favor of the maternal capacities of the college-bred girl." While admitting that an educated mother "can tell her child more, and teach it better grammar," the writer hints darkly that "mother love may be somewhat less intense in educated women as a class than in women of a narrower outlook [who] are apt to be wholly absorbed in their children, and to give themselves up to them with complete abandonment." He concludes that, if these considerations are true, "they go to show that society loses no more by reason of the celibacy of an educated man or woman than from that of one less favored, and that the celibacy of the cultured classes, if it exists, is not peculiarly to be deplored."

Clearly, this writer lived in a decade (1899) cheerfully ignorant of the discoveries of psychoanalysis regarding the harmful effect upon children's development of the "parent-fixations" so often induced by the "complete abandonment" of mothers to their offspring. Harmful to both mother and child, this attitude has become the target for the special censure of mental hygienists. Over-intense mother love, which is partly the result of the "narrow outlook" that Gardner seems to approve, and the total absorption of mothers in children are precisely the states of mind that psychiatrists deplore. Far from its being true that the divided interests of the college-trained mother react harmfully on her child, it has been pretty conclusively established that these wider concerns are positively beneficial in preventing mother-fixations that deaden initiative in children and make the upbuilding in them of independent personalities difficult, if not impossible.

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[18] Popenoe and Johnson, *loc. cit.*, pp. 247–248.

[19] "College Women and Matrimony," in *Education*, Vol. XX, pp. 285–291.

Finally, mention should be made of the theory that the state is not so much concerned with the marriage of its educated men and women as it is with their character, ability, and achievements. From this point of view, society's chief interest is not in the question whether cultured persons add to its physical life, but rather whether they contribute fully to its intellectual and spiritual life. Indeed, Gardner goes so far as to say: "History and observation surely do not warrant the assertion that the quality of these is determined by marriage." [20]

II. *The View That Celibacy among the Educated Class Is a Grave Social Evil.*

The above considerations are minimized or opposed by an important group of eugenists and social investigators, who argue that the low percentage of marriages among college men and women is a serious social disadvantage, which, if allowed to continue, will result in a progressive lowering of the quality alike of the human stock and of the civilization it has built. These men are armed with facts and figures which tend to show that a good biological inheritance is of the utmost importance to every human being; that intellectual and artistic ability are due chiefly to heredity, and are far more prevalent among the cultured classes than among unskilled wage-earners. Karl Pearson estimates, on the basis of investigations of the inheritance of ability in families, that "exceptional fathers produce exceptional sons at a rate three to six times as great as non-exceptional—the superior stock produces above the average at over twice the rate of the inferior stock. Pairs of exceptional parents produce exceptional sons at a rate more than ten times as great as pairs of non-exceptional parents."[21] Pearson has also made intensive investigations of over 3,000 school children with regard to the resemblance of brothers and sisters in physical, mental, and moral traits. The correlations between sister and sister, brother and brother, and sister and brother for various physical traits averaged about .5, and the correlations for mental and moral characteristics were slightly higher. Commenting on the results, Holmes[22] says: "If the fraternal correlation for mental ability or temper is about the same as the fraternal correlation for eye color and cephalic index (characters not sensibly influenced by the environment) we must conclude, as Pearson argues, that correlations in these mental characteristics are due mainly to inheritance."

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[20] Gardner, *loc. cit.,* p. 291.

In his valuable studies of *English Men of Science* and *Noteworthy Families,* Francis Galton has also made important contributions to the evidence on the inheritance of mental ability. Further evidence is furnished by Schuster and Elderton in their study of the comparative scholastic standings of fathers and sons at Oxford and the famous schools of Harrow and Charterhouse. With striking regularity, the percentage of scholarship among fathers at Oxford decreased with that of their sons, while the correlation coefficients between father and son were .29 or .31, according to the method of calculation.

It is highly probable that, in all these studies, *too much causative effect is attributed to inheritance, and too little to home environment and educational opportunities.* Referring to the correlations of ability between parents and offspring, and between siblings, Holmes comments: "Of course association, similarity of home environment, and common training may tend to increase these correlations." But he hastens to quote the remark of Pearson that home environment "is in itself a part of the stock." Further, he cites the measurements of Thorndike on the performance of school children, associated for years in the same school, which go to show that, under the same stimuli and training, children were quite as different in mental ability at twelve to fourteen as they had been between nine and ten.[23] In this connection it might be pointed out that if certain children were hampered by poverty and its train of evils—defective home surroundings, bad neighborhoods, malnutrition, uncorrected defects of sight and hearing, work before and after school hours and the like—at the beginning of their school course, they might very well be so hampered five years later. In other words, the comparison was probably made of unequals.

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[21] *Philosophical Transactions,* Vol. CXCV. Quoted in *American Journal of Sociology,* Vol. XIV, pp. 733–734.

[22] See his *The Trend of the Race,* p. 104.

[23] Holmes, *The Trend of the Race* (Harçourt, Braçe & Company, New York, 1921), p. 107. By permission.

We are still lacking in authoritative evidence of the degree in which mental abilities are influenced by environmental circumstances (including those during gestation), although Watson's experiments have done much to demonstrate the importance of these determining conditions in the case of certain emotions, such as fear. Moreover, mental ability appears to be a trait which does not closely follow the Mendelian law. Indeed, the investigations of Hurst seem to prove that musical ability is transmitted as a recessive, not a dominant character; and Davenport's studies of numerous family records lead him to the same conclusion with respect to artistic and literary ability, mechanical skill, calculating ability, and memory. Commenting on these facts, Holmes says: "It is not denied that Mendel's Law holds for the transmission of mental as well as physical characteristics, but it is not proven that mental peculiarities are inherited in accordance with any simple Mendelian ratio. Neither is the evidence satisfactory that superior ability of various kinds is recessive to the normal conditions." [24] It appears, then, that although very able scientists declare that mental ability is inherited, most of these men are careful to add that the traits which make up mental ability are highly complex and may be profoundly influenced by environing conditions. To quote Holmes once more: "A child of good ancestry but exposed while *in utero* to the influence of malnutrition, alcohol, or the toxins of disease at the time when the delicate architecture of its brain is being built up may fall considerably short of its normal expectation in intellectual development." [25]

Social Heredity.

But while psychologists and biologists continue to disagree with regard to the relative importance of heredity and environment in determining mental ability, and even concerning the essential character of mental abilities as dominants or recessives, no competent student denies that environment does play a significant rôle in developing these abilities. The home surroundings of educated men and women, the social environment in which they live and move, are rich in stimuli for developing the minds and tastes of children. From their early childhood, these boys and girls are accustomed to hearing social, literary, scientific, and artistic questions discussed by their parents and elders; they are surrounded by books, material for handwork, artistic copies of great works of art, all of which are quickening of dormant abilities. It is idle to ignore or minimize the fact that the offspring of such parents, reared in cultured homes and educated in good schools, have a tremendous advantage over the children of parents of the laboring class, and will, in all probability, make much larger contributions to the world's stock of knowledge, wisdom, and beauty.

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[24] *Ibid.*, p. 11. By permission.
[25] *Ibid.*, p. 110.

It appears, then, that even if mental abilities were not determined in an important degree by inheritance (which they probably are), nevertheless society would very greatly benefit by the marriage of educated men and women because of their superior social heredity. *Therefore, the conclusion seems inevitable that, from the viewpoint of society and its spiritual and material needs, the low marriage rate of college-bred men and women is socially disadvantageous.*

HOW CAN THE MARRIAGE RATE OF THE EDUCATED GROUP BE INCREASED?

If it be admitted that college women and men as a group are precisely of the type who would make the most intelligent parents, the question inevitably arises: What can be done to induce more of them to marry? Eugenists are not lacking in suggestions for bringing this about. There is well-nigh complete unanimity among them that a fundamental change is essential in the character of college education for women. This education, they hold, must give them the intellectual and moral training that will incline them toward marriage and motherhood. Instead of stubbornly resisting the introduction of courses in eugenics, domestic science, the physical care of children, child psychology, and child guidance, the college authorities should bend every effort toward directing women students into these courses, even to the point of making them compulsory. It is confidently believed that such a concerted reform on the part of all colleges and universities educating women would effect a sharp rise in the marriage rate of that group.

It seems hardly open to question that courses in eugenics and parenthood, in the history, social functions and contemporary problems of the family, might very wisely be incorporated in the offerings of colleges and universities educating not women alone, but both sexes. These subjects have developed a rich and useful content that would no doubt prove interesting and valuable to college students—both men and women. Such courses might even incline some students toward matrimony and parenthood. But this latter point seems more than a little doubtful. It is not knowledge that impels young people to marry, but emotions. Ignorance of eugenics is not the real barrier to establishing a home, but rather lack of economic security and financial sufficiency. If college girls were equipped with all the information now available with regard to the arts of housekeeping and child-rearing, this equipment would not suffice to make college men and women marry if social and economic conditions were not favorable to such unions. It has already been pointed out, more than once, that so long as society hinders rather than helps the educated young woman in her attempt to reconcile professional interests with marriage and motherhood, a proportion of college women will not marry. And as long as our social and educational systems require years of professional training and experience of young men before they can earn a salary that makes marriage practicable, these men will hesitate to assume responsibility for a dependent wife and family. The way out would seem to lie in whole-hearted social acceptance of the theory that both men and women should contribute to the economic support of their common home if they desire; and, further, in social aid and encouragement given to practical experiments to discover how this may be accomplished *without sacrificing home life and children.* Needless to say, the day of that social acceptance and encouragement has not dawned on the horizon, although it may not be so remote as some writers would have us think.

One of the factors determining the low marriage rates among college graduates is the rooted belief of Americans that young people should not marry until they can maintain a home. This deep-seated conviction, carried out in practice, has prevented more marriages than can be estimated. Yet in many instances marriage would have been entirely practicable had the parents of the engaged couple been willing to give their son and daughter financial aid during the early years of the marriage until they had firmly built the economic foundations of their common life. There are many thoughtful persons to-day who advocate such parental assistance because it makes possible early marriage of young persons at a time when they are most ardently in love and desirous of making a home. It is possible that in course of time the old prejudice against such financial assistance may break down and society may even come to regard parental aid in making marriage possible for their children a wholly commendable practice.

Another reform that might be undertaken is the extension of coëducation in colleges and universities, and the gradual disappearance of separate colleges for the sexes. This would appear to be a wise suggestion from the eugenic standpoint. Certainly four years of life, during the romantic ages between eighteen and twenty-two, spent in the academic seclusion of the typical woman's college, does seem to incline many college girls to seek the society of their own sex for recreation, intellectual give-and-take and congenial projects of various kinds. Probably the same effects are produced in men. To make the sexes more or less independent and ignorant of each other in the most susceptible period of their lives, when they should be establishing a sound heterosexuality, seems on its face to be a colossal eugenic blunder.

This leads to consideration of a closely similar social situation that exists after graduation, when a high percentage of college men and women enter skilled occupations. If their work lies in a city remote from home, they may live through many bitter hours of loneliness, and, quite possibly have few or no opportunities to meet agreeable persons of the other sex. Thousands of educated young men and women just starting on their life work find themselves "socially marooned." It has been estimated that, in New York City alone, there were 300,000 unmarried men and 450,000 unmarried women, a considerable proportion of whom had a very restricted range of selection of a mate. Some years ago, a newspaper discussed this social situation in an editorial, and received in reply hundreds of letters from young men and women who complained of being without social opportunities.[26] Instead of criticizing young professional workers for turning their backs on matrimony, it would seem wise for the critics to undertake surveys of the conditions in our large cities with respect to the opportunities they offer educated men and women to meet and know each other. Of this situation, and of the separation of the sexes in colleges, Popenoe and Johnson quote a woman novelist as saying:

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[26] See W. E. Carson, *The Marriage Revolt* (Hearst's International Library Co., New York, 1915), p. 416.

> I'm a Wellesley woman, but one reason why I'm dead against women's colleges is because they shut girls up with women, at the most impressionable period of the girls' lives, when they should be meeting members of the opposite sex continually, learning to tolerate their little weaknesses and getting ready to marry them.
>
> The city should make arrangements to chaperone the meetings of its young citizens. There ought to be municipal gathering places where, under the supervision of tactful, warm-hearted women—themselves successfully married—girls and men might get introduced to each other and might get acquainted.[27]

No doubt the majority of men and women would disapprove of such municipal action, or would merely be amused by the suggestion. Probably an organized and determined civic effort to throw young people of opposite sexes together would defeat its own end, at least in the present state of popular opinion, and would meet with scant coöperation from the youths it sought to reach. But surely churches, clubs, and social organizations of every sort, where young men and women meet naturally, might accomplish more than they do by way of creating pleasant opportunities for them to know each other. The Y. W. C. A. and Y. M. C. A. might well coöperate in trying out various ways and means of meeting this social problem. Indeed, it is questionable whether these useful organizations can render their greatest social service by remaining separate.

Dr. Paul Popenoe has suggested that the *choice of a profession* is often decisive in the opportunities it offers for friendships with the opposite sex leading to marriage. Not long ago one hundred educated women listed some of the types of work open to college women in the presumed order of their "marriageability." The choices were combined to form weighted averages, with the one at the top of the list considered to give a woman the best chance to marry, the one at the foot the least. The ranking follows: "Secretarial work, dramatics, bookkeeping, stenography, journalism, selling (insurance, clerking in stores, and the like), hostess (hotel, cafe, tearoom), buyer for a large firm, nurse, lawyer, teacher, dietitian, librarian, social worker, physician." Commenting on these choices Popenoe says: "If this represents anything like the facts (and I believe it does), many young women are being encouraged to go into professions that have the highest likelihood of barring them from marriage." [28] This is especially true of nursing and teaching which rank low in the list of marriageability. Nearly 300,000 trained nurses are at work in the United States and Popenoe states that only about one half of this educated group ever marry. Teaching is conspicuously a profession into which college graduates flock, only to find it a blind alley so far as social relationships with men and marriage are concerned.

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[27] Popenoe and Johnson, *op. cit.,* p. 235. By permission of The Macmillan Company.

Strange as it may seem, Christian peoples have not yet developed a noble conception of love between the sexes and a frank advocacy of its vitalizing influence in the individual life. Western civilization is even yet influenced by the ascetic philosophy of the Latin Church Fathers. We are still more than a little ashamed of intense romantic love, more than half convinced that there is something reprehensible about it. Unlike the Orientals, Occidental peoples have never frankly accepted sexual love as rich in possibilities for the enhancement of life in its many phases. They have continued to be embarrassed and furtive in their attitude toward it; and, what is much worse, to indoctrinate the young with the theory that there is something indecent about the sexual act. A complete regeneration of our ideas and attitudes regarding the love of men and women, especially in its culmination in an act of physical and spiritual union, is profoundly needed in our contemporary civilization. Sexual love should be honestly faced for what it is—an emotion replete in potentialities of beauty, of spiritual as well as physical intimacy, of the heightening of all the meanings and values of life. Conversely, it should be understood as an impulse which, without enlightened guidance and control, is capable of overriding and degrading the entire nature. If young women and men had been instructed from childhood in the ideal significance of love between the sexes, had been imbued with reverence for it as a culminating and profoundly enriching experience, there would probably be less skepticism and indifference in the minds of certain young people to-day regarding love and marriage. Educated men and women would be more apt to seek this experience in marriage, even at the sacrifice of a part of their ambition and freedom.

But even if this much-needed education were given, if college years afforded ample opportunities for the sexes to meet and come to know each other, if women were free to carry on a chosen work after marriage, there still would be superior men and women who, failing to find satisfying mates, would never marry. Individuation is accompanied by ever more exacting standards regarding the marriage relationship and what constitutes a congenial mate. Furthermore, life offers immeasurably fuller opportunities and experience to the single woman (if not to the man) than it did even a generation ago. These two causes will probably always operate to lower the marriage rate among college-bred men and women. Biologically, a portion of this intellectual group may accept sterility; but socially they may be abundantly fruitful in ideas and enterprises which promote the well-being of humanity.

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[28] "How Can Young People Get Acquainted?" *Journal of Social Hygiene,* Vol. XVIII, April, 1932, pp. 218–224.

TOPICS FOR REPORTS

1. Age at Marriage of College Graduates and Its Effects on Fecundity: Marriage and Professional Work.
   Frank Lorimer, and Frederic Osborn, *Dynamics of Population* (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1934), pp. 258–260, 260–268, 307–313, 320–331.
2. Marriage and Non-Marriage in the United States.
   Joseph K. Folsom, *The Family* (John Wiley and Sons, Inc., New York, 1934), pp. 316–346.
3. Social and Economic Conditions Influencing Marriage.
   Ernest R. Groves, *The American Family* (J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, 1934), Chs. VII, VIII.
   E. R. Groves, *Marriage* (Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1933), Ch. XXI.
4. Examine the alumnae (or alumni) registers of a few women's colleges and coëducational universities and find out the proportion of graduates who are married.
5. Summarize the criticisms against the higher education of women contained in a series of articles treating of "College Women and the Marriage Rate" in the issues of the *Journal of Heredity* for April and June, 1915, and January, April, and May, 1917. Comment on these strictures and try to meet them.

ADDITIONAL SELECTED READINGS

1. Paul Popenoe, *The Conservation of the Family* (The Williams and Wilkins Company, Baltimore, 1926), pp. 23–34, 48–55, 68–71.

2. Paul Popenoe, and R. H. Johnson, *Applied Eugenics* (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1923), Ch. IV.
3. J. L. Gillin, *Social Pathology* (The Century Company, New York, 1933), Ch. XXI.
4. E. R. Groves, and W. F. Ogburn, *American Marriage and Family Relationships* (Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1928), Chs. XIII, XXI.

CHAPTER XIII

THE PROBLEM OF BIRTH CONTROL

To multiply the people and not increase the joy of living is the most dismal end that could be set for human striving.—Sir William Beveridge.

THE FALLING BIRTHRATE

THE last half century has been marked by a conspicuous fall in the birth rate [1] in the more advanced countries of Europe and in America, Australia, and New Zealand. Havelock Ellis declares that, since 1905, the decline has been general throughout Europe with the exception of three countries—all backward—namely, Ireland, Rumania, and Bulgaria.[2]

The birth rate trend in Europe between 1871 and 1915 is indicated in the following table: [3]

Years	England and Wales	Scotland	Ireland	France	Germany	Austria	Hungary	Italy	Norway	Sweden	Russia	Spain	Belgium	Holland
1871–1876	35.5	35.0	27.4	25.5	38.9	39.3	42.8	36.9	30.2	30.7	50.3		32.6	36.1
1876–1880	35.4	34.8	25.7	25.3	39.2	38.7	44.1	37.0	31.7	30.3	48.4		32.0	36.4
1881–1885	33.5	33.3	24.0	24.7	37.0	38.1	44.6	37.8	31.2	29.4	49.2	36.7	30.9	34.8
1886–1890	31.4	31.4	22.8	23.1	36.5	37.6	43.7	37.3	30.8	28.8	48.7	36.2	29.4	33.6
1891–1895	30.5	30.5	22.9	22.4	36.3	37.3	42.0	35.9	30.3	27.4	48.2	35.8	29.1	32.9
1896–1900	29.2	30.0	23.1	22.0	36.0	37.0	39.7	33.9	30.3	26.9	49.4	34.6	29.0	32.2
1901	28.5	29.5	22.7	22.0	35.7	36.8	37.8	32.5	29.6	27.0	48.0	34.9	29.4	32.3
1905	27.3	28.6	23.4	20.6	33.0	34.0	36.1	32.7	27.4	25.7	44.8	35.2	26.2	30.8
1910	25.1	26.2	23.3	19.6	29.8	32.6	35.7	33.3	26.1	24.7		33.1	23.8	28.6
1912	23.8	25.9	23.0	19.0	28.2	31.2	36.2	32.4	25.8	23.7		31.5	23.2	28.1
1913	24.1	25.5	22.8	18.8	27.4	29.6		31.7	25.4	23.1		30.3		28.2
1914	23.8	26.1	22.6	18.0				31.1	25.3	22.8		29.6		
1915	21.8	23.9	21.8						23.8	21.6				

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[1] The birth rate indicates the annual number of births per thousand of the population.

[2] Havelock Ellis, *The Task of Social Hygiene*, p. 136.

[3] Samuel Holmes, *The Trend of the Race* (Harcourt, Brace & Company, New York, 1921), p. 119. By permission.

A study of this table will show that, in the first five-year period, Russia, Hungary, Austria, and Germany had the highest birth rates and France the lowest—25.5. England, Wales, Scotland, Holland and Italy each had a birth rate over 35; while Sweden and Norway showed a rate over 30. By 1915, however, a marked change had taken place. Russia still led with an *estimated* birth rate of approximately 45.5; but in the remaining countries, the birth rate had fallen to about 25 or less, with the exception of Hungary, Austria, Italy and Spain, where it remained above 30. During the World War, the birth rates of all the countries involved fell sharply, as was to be expected. But in England, the rate rose from 18.5 in 1919 to 25 in 1920, and 22 in 1921.[4] The apparently low birth rate in Ireland can probably be attributed to the facts that the country has a considerable proportion of persons of non-child-bearing age and that its economic conditions make delayed marriages inevitable. The birth-rate among women who are of child-bearing age, however, is very high.

When we turn to the newer countries, we find similar conditions. About seventy years ago, the birth rate in Australia was about 43 per 1,000. In 1916, the birth rate had fallen to 27 and in 1920 to 25, and it has since continued to fall. Until recently in the United States, no accurate birth statistics were available for the country as a whole, owing to the fact that not all the states of the Union required a careful registration of births. The census, therefore, furnished no such data concerning the declining birth rate as most European countries have long placed at the disposal of the social investigator. Wilcox has compiled census data showing the steady decrease in the ratio of children under five years of age to every 1,000 women of child-bearing age (16 to 44 years) in the United States. In 1800, the ratio was 976; in 1860 it was 714; and in 1920 it had fallen to 467.[5]

During the last twenty years the birth rate has fallen in all advanced countries with a swiftness somewhat disturbing to students of population problems. The latest figures as given in the *Statistical Year-book*

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[4] Harold Cox, *The Problem of Population* (G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1923), p. 19.

[5] "The Change in the Proportion of Children in the United States," *Publications of the American Statistical Association,* Vol. XII, 1909–1911, pp. 490–499. Quoted in E. M. East, *Mankind at the Crossroads* (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1923), p. 209.

of the League of Nations, 1934–1935 for selected countries are as follows:

Countries	*Annual Birth Rates*			
	1921–1925	*1930*	*1933*	*1934*
United States	22.5	18.9	16.4	17.1
England and Wales	20.4	16.8	14.9	15.3
Belgium	20.4	18.8	16.6	16.0 **
Germany	22.1	17.5	14.7	18
France	19.3	18	16.3	16.1
Italy	29.7	26.7	23.7	23.2
Spain *	29.8	28.2	27.6	26.2
Norway	22.2	17	14.9	14.8
Sweden	19.1	15.4	13.7	13.7 **
Denmark	22.3	18.7	17.3	17.8
Netherlands	25.7	23.1	20.8	20.7
Switzerland	19.5	17.2	16.4	16.2
Bulgaria	39.0	31.3	29.2	30.0
Portugal *	33.2	29.8	29.0	28.4
Roumania	37.9	35.0	32.0	32.4 **
Egypt	43.0	45.7	44.1	...
Australia	23.9	19.9	16.8	16.4
New Zealand	22.2	18.8	16.6	16.5

* Only approximate.

** Figures from the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company of New York City.

It will be observed, in scanning the above figures, that it is precisely the backward nations like Egypt, Bulgaria, Rumania, and Portugal that have the highest birth rates. The most advanced countries in general intelligence and conditions of living among the masses have the lowest rates. In interpreting the above figures it should not be forgotten that the drastic decline in birth rates since 1930 is unquestionably in part due to the world-wide economic depression which accelerated a trend already well under way. In a few countries, as England and Wales and the United States, a moderate return of prosperity has resulted in a slight rise in birth rates.

The birth rates in Soviet Russia cannot be given with accuracy since the government does not secure and publish these figures. However, according to a Russian official publication,[6] the population in the Soviet Union rose from 147,027,900 on December 17, 1926, to 165,748,400 on January 1, 1933, an increase of 12.73 per cent in six years or an average increase of 2 per cent. Needless to say this is a very high rate of population growth, equaled in few civilized countries of the world. It means a doubling of population in fifty years should the rate continue. The official Soviet newspaper *Pravda* reported in the spring of 1935 that the population of Soviet Russia "is now estimated as 173,000,000, an increase of 4,500,000 over last year." [7] In an address delivered in Moscow December 4, 1935, Stalin is quoted as saying: "Living has become better and gayer. This has brought about a marked increase in the birth rate and a decrease in the death rate, which we welcome and of which we approve. Our yearly population increase equals a whole Finland. . . ." [8]

The explanation of the huge annual population increases in Soviet Russia, a nation that is making titanic efforts to improve the material conditions of living of its people, to wipe out illiteracy, and to afford the richest cultural opportunities in music, drama, and the graphic arts to its citizens, probably lies in the fact that there are vast areas in the U.S.S.R. which are still unoccupied or thinly settled. When the Soviet Republic approaches the thickly settled conditions of certain European countries to the west it will almost inevitably follow that birth rates will fall.

Urban and Rural Birth Rates.

In most civilized countries the urban birth rate has been lower than that of the rural districts; and such continues to be the case, although rural birth rates are steadily decreasing. The following figures give some urban birth rates in Europe, Asia, Africa, and North and South America that are markedly lower than the national rates of the same years.[9]

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[6] *U.S.S.R. in Figures, 1934.* The author is indebted for most of the following facts to the Population Association of America.

[7] Reports in the New York *Times,* May 29, 1935 and June 23, 1935, based on reports in *Pravda.*

[8] Quoted in the New York *Times,* December 5, 1935.

[9] From the 1926 report of the League of Nations Health Organization, *Epidemiological Intelligence,* No. 10, July, 1926, p. 148. (Geneva.)

Birth Rates in Large Cities

	1924	*1925*
105 English cities	19.4	19.3
London	18.6	18.9
Edinburgh	19.7	19.2
Belfast	24.0	23.6
Dublin	25.6	17.3
New York	21.7	20.8
14 Dutch cities	21.2	20.6
46 German cities	14.9	15.9
Berlin	10.1	11.6
Cologne	18.0	18.7
26 Swiss cities	6.4	12.8
Paris	15.9	16.2
Madrid	24.5	24.8
Vienna	14.7	13.8
Santiago (Chile)	30.8	26.3
Buenos Aires	24.4	24.8
Delhi (India)	47.8	...
Moscow	30.4	...

In the United States, the census report on *Birth, Stillbirth and Infant Mortality Statistics* for 1932 [10] gives the birth rates for cities of over 10,000 and for rural areas and small cities with a population of 2,500 to 10,000. In the larger cities the birth rate [11] is 16.7 whereas in rural areas and small cities the rate is 18.1—a difference of 1.4 or 14 per 10,000 people.[12] It is quite possible that the disparity in rates is larger than is shown, owing to the fact that a growing number of confinements of mothers living in rural areas now occur in city hospitals and the births are accredited to the city rather than the village.

For years past the population of American cities has grown at the expense of farms and villages. This fact is clearly brought out by O. E. Baker, Senior Agricultural Economist in the Department of Agriculture in Washington.[13] He writes:

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[10] Latest available; published in 1934.

[11] In the registration area where births are carefully registered. This area included every State except Texas in 1932.

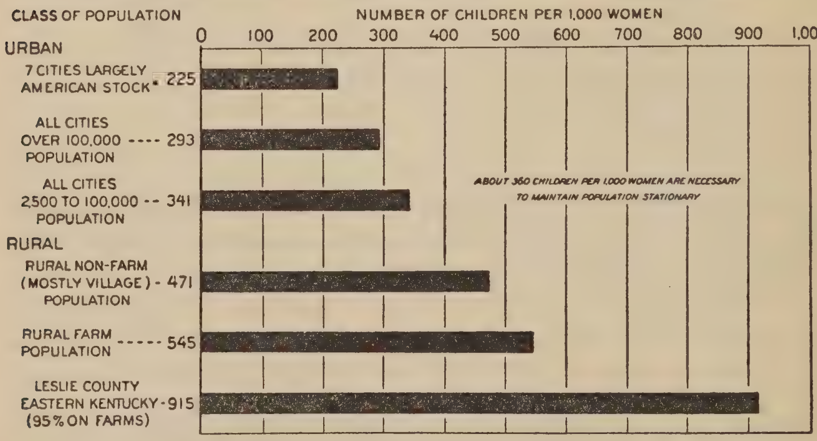
[12] *Loc. cit.*, p. 39.

[13] Reprint of an address on *Population and Occupational Shifts,* delivered before the American Country Life Association, November 19, 1934.

In 1930 the seven cities largely of American stock lacked nearly 40 per cent of having enough children to maintain their population permanently stationary without accessions from outside, all cities over 100,000 population lacked about 20 per cent, and the smaller cities lacked nearly 7 per cent. On the other hand, *in the rural non-farm population there was a surplus of 30 per cent and in the farm population a surplus of 50 per cent.* Rural surplus and urban deficit almost balanced in 1930, but since 1930 there has been a further decrease of births in the nation as a whole of over 12 per cent.[14]

The disparities between the number of children under five years of age per 1,000 women of fertile age in our cities and in rural areas is strikingly shown in the following graph.

NUMBER OF CHILDREN UNDER 5 YEARS OF AGE PER 1,000 WOMEN 15 TO 44 YEARS OF AGE ON APRIL 1, 1930, URBAN COMPARED WITH RURAL POPULATION IN UNITED STATES



* PORTLAND (OREGON), SAN FRANCISCO, LOS ANGELES, KANSAS CITY, ST. LOUIS, NASHVILLE, AND ATLANTA

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE NEG 25167 BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

About 360 children under 5 years of age per 1,000 women 15 to 45 years of age (child-bearing age) are required to maintain population stationary at the 1930 expectation of life in the United States of 62 years. In 1930 the seven cities largely of American stock, represented in the top bar of the graph, lacked, therefore, about 38 per cent of having enough children to maintain their population permanently without accessions from outside, and all cities of over 100,000 population had a deficit of nearly 20 per cent, while the smaller cities had a deficit of about 6 per cent. On the other hand, the rural nonfarm (mostly village and suburban) population had a surplus of 30 per cent, and the farm population a surplus of 50 per cent. In 1930 urban deficit and rural surplus almost balanced.[15]

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[14] Italics mine.

[15] Issued by Bureau of Agricultural Economics, United States Department of Agriculture.

CAUSES OF THE DECLINING BIRTH RATE

So impressive a social phenomenon as this of a steadily declining birth rate could not escape the attention of social investigators, who have been busy for a generation looking into its causes and evaluating its effects. Probably the efficient causes are (1) delayed marriages, (2) abortions, and (3) voluntary restriction of births. The first condition operates, of course, to decrease the fertility of married women. A woman who marries at twenty-eight or thirty instead of twenty or twenty-two years of age obviously has curtailed the period during which she might bear children by eight years. Moreover, these are among the most fruitful years of her life. A considerable body of evidence exists to the effect that the period of a woman's highest fertility is that from seventeen years to twenty, closely followed by the period of twenty to twenty-five. Now, although the age of marriage has not risen among the working group, indeed has slightly decreased, the marriage age has tended to advance in the middle and professional groups. College women marry from one and a half to two years later than their non-college sisters and cousins in the same walk of life. Dr. Mary Roberts Smith's investigation in 1900 showed that the average age at marriage of 343 college women was 26.3 years, whereas the age of 313 of their non-college women relatives was 24.3. A more recent study by the author of 472 college women and an equal number of non-college women of the same social class revealed that the average age of the college group at marriage was 25.7 years and of the non-college group, 24.3.

The question whether civilized man at present is characterized by pathological sterility, i.e., infertility caused by adverse conditions, has been the subject of much controversy. As stated before, Herbert Spencer held that increase in individuation, through the combined influences of higher civilization and of education, results in a decrease in fertility. But this theory is contradicted by the evidence compiled by Professor Edward A. Ross,[16] showing that in the period between 1851 and 1865, the average number of children in English and Scotch families, where the wife had been under nineteen at her marriage, was 7.28 and 7.8 respectively. In the case of Norway, the census of 1920 showed that the type family of surviving couples, married before 1888, the bride being eighteen or nineteen, was actually ten! These families are larger than the average among certain backward peoples. Certainly the theory that civilization is, in itself, the foe of fertility remains to be proved.

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[16] "How Fast Can Man Increase?", *Scientific Monthly,* March, 1927, p. 266.

On the other hand, P. K. Whelpton [17] believes it "certain" that the low birth rate to-day is due partly to biological and physiological causes. He cites two leading gynecologists of Boston to the effect that in their experience there is a considerable number of sterile married couples in the population who desire and have tried to have children with no success. The percentage of such infecund spouses is estimated by these physicians as between 10 and 13 per cent. Of course, as Whelpton points out, these gynecologists have built up a reputation for helping sterile couples to have children. Therefore it would be precisely these couples who would seek their aid. Thus the percentage estimate would be too high for the population at large. The Milbank Memorial Fund study of 13,558 families in the United States, in which the wife was forty years or over in 1910, reported that 13.9 per cent of these families were childless. But this study was based on census schedules which gave no hint as to whether this childlessness were due to voluntary effort or to sterility.[18]

Beyond doubt one important cause of declining birth rates is the practice of abortion. Dr. Alice Hamilton declares that control of births is carried on all the time by overburdened mothers in tenements but it takes the form of abortion which these women can understand. These abortions may be performed by physicians or midwives or they may be self-induced by methods passed on by word of mouth. No reliable information exists concerning the number of abortions in relation to total pregnancies in this country but the lowest estimate in medical writings is one abortion in five pregnancies. With regard to induced abortions among certain groups, the birth control clinics furnish the most reliable data. A study of the records of 10,000 women, who visited the Birth Control Clinical Research Bureau in New York City between 1925 and 1929, showed that prior to the first clinic visit of these mothers they had had 38,985 pregnancies with 7,677 or 19.7 per cent ending in induced abortions. If these figures are typical for this group, then nearly 20 per cent of the falling birth rate among women visiting birth control clinics is due to abortions by methods that are frequently a menace to health. Sixty per cent of the 7,677 abortions were performed by physicians, 15 per cent by mid-wives and 25 per cent were self-induced by ignorant and dangerous means.[19] It should not be assumed that these figures are typical of women in the country at large; possibly they are too high. Yet it has been estimated that one and one-half million abortions [20] are performed annually in the United States. The number of live births reported in the registration area [21] in 1932 was 2,074,042. If the estimate of physicians with regard to the yearly number of abortions in this country is approximately correct, then in 1932 there occurred more than half as many abortions as live births!

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[17] Of the Scripps Foundation, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio.

[18] "Causes of the Decline in Birth Rates," *Milbank Memorial Quarterly,* Vol. XIII, No. 3, July, 1935, pp. 238–239.

The most powerful agent in bringing about a declining birth rate is unquestionably voluntary restriction of births by the use of contraceptive measures. These methods have been in use in France for many years, especially since 1860, but they seem not to have been practised much in England until after 1875. In most other European countries, the birth rates fell only slightly until the opening of the twentieth century. That voluntary restriction is the chief cause of the falling birth rate in England (and in all probability in the other countries) is substantiated by an investigation made by Sidney Webb in 1906. Mr. Webb made systematic inquiries concerning voluntary restriction of families among English men and women of the middle class in all parts of the country. He received replies from 316 married persons which showed that, of this number, 242, or 76 per cent, had limited the size of their families. If marriages prior to 1875 (the year when voluntary restriction began) be eliminated from the list, there remain 236 limited marriages and fifty-seven unlimited, or 80 per cent of marriages reporting voluntary restriction.[22]

The thorough and painstaking study made by Ethel M. Elderton of the English birth rate in the counties north of the Humber River led her to the conclusion that the immense fall in the rate of births "is not due to any physiological decrease in fertility, but to a widespread and nearly universal artificial restriction of the family." Miss Elderton's investigation of the hypothesis that higher wages, pursuit of pleasure, and increase of luxury had induced partial sterility in the English people led her to the conclusion that there "is no evidence whatever" to support it. On the contrary, she unearthed an immense amount of evidence indicating the very general sale of contraceptive drugs and devices, as well as drugs designed to induce abortion.[23]

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[19] Marie E. Kopp, *Birth Control in Practice* (Robert M. McBride and Company, New York, 1934), p. 121.

[20] Dr. Eric Matsner, *Birth Control Review*, November, 1935.

[21] Includes all the States in the continental area except Texas together with Hawaii and the Virgin Islands. See census report on *Birth, Stillbirth and Infant Mortality Statistics* (1932), p. 3.

[22] Sidney Webb, "Physical Degeneracy or Race Suicide," *Popular Science Monthly*, December, 1906, pp. 522–523.

In the United States voluntary birth control has become increasingly general since the opening of the twentieth century. Few studies have been made to determine the extent to which contraception is practised in this country. In an investigation of the sex life of 2,200 women of intelligence and education, Katherine Bement Davis found that 730 of 1,000 women who filled out questionnaires practised contraception—over seven tenths.[24] Other evidence is furnished by the 230 birth control clinics (December, 1935) operating throughout the United States. To these flock many thousands of burdened mothers each year seeking relief from unlimited child-bearing.[25]

MOTIVES LEADING TO FAMILY LIMITATION

What are the reasons that lead married couples to restrict the size of their families? It can scarcely be doubted that one of the paramount motives is economic. In a world society where millions of men and women are engaged in a daily struggle, year in and year out, to earn a meager subsistence and hold their families together, any reliable means of limiting the number of children brought into the home will, inevitably, as knowledge of contraceptives becomes general, lead to family restriction. Of the 730 women in Davis's study who practised contraception, 156 gave the economic motive as primary, 171 mentioned health and 100 gave both reasons as dominant. The Birth Control Clinical Research Bureau in New York City receives approximately 10,000 letters annually from distressed mothers all in much the same vein as the following:

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[23] "Report on the English Birth-rate," Part I, "North of the Humber," *Eugenics Laboratory Memoirs* (Cambridge University Press, 1914), Vol. XVII, p. 232.

[24] *Factors in the Sex Life of Twenty-Two Hundred Women* (Harper & Brothers, New York, 1929), p. 14.

[25] See *Birth Control Review,* February, 1935, pp. 4–6. Only a fraction of the thousands are mentioned here.

> I am the mother of six children ranging in age from one year to eleven years and am very much afraid that I am pregnant again. This is discouraging to me to the point of despair, for with the one year old baby and a two and a half year old girl who has tuberculosis of the knee joint and has worn a cast for fifteen months, I have my hands full. Then there are the four other children, three in school. My husband is a painter and makes good wages, but he is not strong and should have a rest but that is impossible with six little ones to feed and clothe. My health is unusually good, but how can it last if I am to bear a child every year or so? [26]

Ill health, of husband or wife or both, is another potent reason for restriction of births, especially among the educated classes, who understand the basic importance of healthy heredity for every child.

Behind the phenomenon of voluntary restriction of births the student of social conditions naturally looks for the psychological causes. Prominent among these is the desire on the part of husband and wife not to lower in any marked degree the standard of living to which they are accustomed. Certain writers are disposed to criticize with some asperity those educated middle-class husbands and wives who are not willing to accept cramped living quarters, plain food, out-dated garments, and few recreations in order to rear large families. But the exhortations of these gentlemen, and their gloomy forebodings of race deterioration, seem to have had no appreciable effect in bringing about an upward trend in the birth rate curve, or even in staying its downward fall.

This leads us to consider a second psychological cause of a lowered birth rate. With the progress of civilization has developed a higher regard for human personality—the personality of the child no less than that of the adult. This heightened consciousness of the personal worth and personal rights of children has led governments to restrict the exploitation of boys and girls in industry and to enforce compulsory education laws against recalcitrant parents. Fathers and mothers, also, especially in those groups that are not subjected to heavy economic pressure, have developed a sensitive appreciation of their obligations to their offspring. They are reluctant to bring into the world more children than they can house, feed and clothe comfortably, as well as educate and prepare adequately for their life work. Thoughtful, responsible men and women are more alive to-day than ever before to the handicaps under which children have labored in the past, and, indeed,

[26] Margaret Sanger, *Motherhood in Bondage* (Brentano's, New York, 1928), p. 110.

labor at present in the large families of the poor; and they are resolved that their little ones shall have a fair start in life, so far as wholesome home environment, sound education, and training can secure it. Thus it has come about, at one and the same time, that children are no longer economic assets to their parents, since the state constitutes itself an "over-parent" to guarantee them against ruthless exploitation; and parents themselves have a deeper sense of parental responsibility in most instances, where the struggle for a bare living has not stifled it. Both these conditions operate powerfully among the more intelligent laborers and the middle class to depress the birth rate.

A third motive working to the same end is the more or less conscious rebellion of women against the social philosophy that they exist primarily as *means* for recruiting the race—not as *ends* in themselves, in the same sense as men are ends. The higher education of women has opened their eyes to many things, notably to the handicaps that their historic function as mothers has laid upon them in their efforts to attain complete and well-rounded personalities. A restless dissatisfaction with continual child-bearing has long been smouldering among women, and they are becoming ever more insistent in their claims to be considered first of all as free and intelligent individuals, not primarily as mothers. But this is not all. Refined and thoughtful women, who have a sensitive feeling for personal independence and dignity, are in revolt against the ancient theory that at marriage their husbands acquire certain definite "marital rights" over their persons. In ever swelling numbers, wives are standing upon their fundamental right to decide whether or not they will engage in sexual intercourse, whether or not they are ready to bear children. "The most far-reaching social development of modern times," says Margaret Sanger, "is the revolt of woman against sex servitude. The most important force in the remaking of the world is a free motherhood. . . . Millions of women are asserting their right to voluntary motherhood. They are determined to decide for themselves whether they shall become mothers, under what conditions, and when. This is the fundamental revolt referred to. It is for woman the key to the temple of liberty." [27]

Undoubtedly, these three motives, together with the powerful reasons of health and economic status, are the unseen agents in bringing about voluntary restriction of offspring and a steadily falling birth rate. It would seem that a fair, unbiased consideration of each in turn would lead to the conclusion that they are dictated by common sense, moral responsibility, and a regard for personal liberty, none of which are conspicuous attributes of primitive or retarded cultures, but rather of highly civilized nations.

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[27] Margaret Sanger, *Woman and the New Race* (Brentano's, New York, 1920), pp. 1 and 5. By permission.

FALLING BIRTH RATES AND POPULATION PROBLEMS

For a generation past certain eugenists have been sounding an insistent warning against the steady decline in national birth rates. Serious statements are uttered from time to time to the effect that society is embarked upon a process of self-extermination or, if not that, at least of degeneration, due to the low birth rate among the educated classes. This is a serious charge, which deserves the thoughtful consideration of students of social conditions and, indeed, of all intelligent persons. Is it true that society is destroying itself by a deliberate artificial restriction of births?

The Theories of Malthus.

Before examining the data at hand with respect to the real growth of populations, and the relation of this growth to the world's food supply, it will be well to consider briefly the theories of population held by the renowned Englishman, Thomas Malthus. In 1798, this clergyman and economist wrote his epoch-making *Essay on the Principle of Population,* which has proven a storm center of controversy ever since its appearance, especially in the present age. In this treatise, Malthus took the position that the population in every country increased so rapidly that it was ever tending to outgrow the food supply. To this fundamental cause he attributed the misery and starvation of the poor. So long as no deliberate measures were taken to prevent the swift growth of populations, there would always be crushing poverty and an insufficient supply of food for the ever-swelling millions. To quote from the opening chapter of the famous *Essay:*

> I think I may fairly make two postulata. First, that food is necessary to the existence of man. Secondly, that the passion between the sexes is necessary, and will remain nearly in its present state. . . . Assuming, then, my postulata as granted, I say, that the power of population is indefinitely greater than the power of the earth to produce subsistence for man.

By the publication of this treatise, Malthus brought down upon himself a torrent of bitter criticism, on the ground that his theory represented a soulless condemnation of the poor to hopeless misery. But such was far from being his intention. Instead of preaching a fatalistic doctrine of despair, Malthus, at least in the later editions of his work, emphasized the importance of developing some intelligent method of restricting the growth of peoples, in the interest of the submerged portion of society. The means advocated by the writer consisted in delayed marriages and a rigid exercise of control of the insurgent sex impulse, both before and after marriage. Needless to say, contraceptive methods were unknown in eighteenth-century England; therefore Malthus was driven to espouse a means of limiting population growth, namely deferred marriages, which has grave social and individual disadvantages.

Although certain details of the Malthusian theory have been adversely criticized even in recent times, contemporary biologists are almost unanimous in declaring that, in its fundamental positions, it is profoundly true. Thus Dr. Raymond Pearl, vital statistician in Johns Hopkins University, declares that Malthus's *Essay* is "one of the greatest books the human mind has produced, so far ahead of its time that in the main his argument is truer and more significant today than it was when he wrote it." [28] With the theories of Malthus in mind, then, let us consider the facts in regard to population in various countries of the world, as well as the rate of population increase.

The Natural Increase of Populations: Ratio of Births to Deaths.

At the outset of our study, it should be understood that the population growth in any country is crudely represented by the ratio of births to deaths. A country like Spain, for instance, with a birth rate (1934) of 26.2 and a death rate of 15.9, had in that year a survival rate or "natural increase" of 10.3 per thousand. In the Netherlands, where the birth rate in 1934 was 20.7, and the death rate only 8.4, the survival rate, or natural increase of population, was 12.3 per thousand.[29] Obviously, if the mortality rate in any country were declining more rapidly than the birth rate, the "natural increase" in that population would be on the upward curve, even though its birth rate might be falling so conspicuously as to call forth the warnings of eugenists. Now this condition once existed in many civilized nations throughout the world. Professor Edward M. East has prepared a valuable table of figures covering the five-year periods from 1890 to 1914 which shows the excess of births over deaths in fifteen European countries and Australia: [30]

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[28] The Menace of Population Growth," Adolf Meyer (Editor), *Birth Control, Facts and Responsibilities* (The Williams & Wilkins Company, Baltimore, 1925), p. 52. By permission.

[29] *Statistical Year-Book of the League of Nations,* 1934–1935.

EXCESS OF BIRTHS OVER DEATHS IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES PER THOUSAND OF THE POPULATION

Averages for five-year periods

Years	Australia	Austria	Belgium	Bulgaria	Denmark	France	Germany
1890–1894	19.7	9.0	8.7	9.7	11.4	0.1	12.5
1895–1899	15.4	11.4	11.1	15.9	13.7	1.3	14.8
1900–1904	14.6	12.1	10.7	17.7	14.0	1.4	14.5
1905–1909	15.7	10.8	9.0	19.0	14.3	0.6	14.0
1910–1914	17.1	10.5	7.6	18.6	13.5	0.4	12.5

Years	Hungary	Italy	Norway	Rumania	Russia	Spain	Sweden	United Kingdom
1890–1894	9.0	10.5	13.0	9.1	12.1	3.8	10.6	10.7
1895–1899	11.4	11.1	14.8	12.9	16.6	5.7	11.2	11.1
1900–1904	11.9	10.4	14.4	14.0	17.7	8.3	10.7	11.1
1905–1909	10.9	10.9	12.5	14.2	16.1	9.2	11.0	11.1
1910–1914	12.8	12.8	12.2	17.4	. . .	8.9	9.8	10.0

A study of the above table will make plain that, in nine countries out of the fifteen listed, the natural increase, i.e., the growth in population due to the excess of births over deaths, steadily increased over a period of thirty-five years. Only in Australia, Belgium, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom was there a falling off in the natural increase, and in most instances this was slight. The enormous natural increase in Bulgaria and Rumania during the period may be explained by the fact that the birth rates in these countries were very high before the World War; and an unexpected increase in food production, due to improved agricultural methods, kept down the infant and adult mortality rates, thus increasing the population far beyond previous rates of growth. Despite a real fall in the birth rates of both Australia and

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[30] *Mankind at the Crossroads* (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1923), p. 271. By permission.

Belgium during the period under consideration, the excess of births over deaths in 1914 was only 2.6 per thousand less in Australia than it had been in 1890; whereas in Belgium the loss was only 1.1 per thousand. In Norway and Sweden, where the birth rates have been declining for many years, the loss in natural increase was only .8 per thousand; and in the United Kingdom, only .7.

These pre-war conditions, however, no longer exist. In the majority of countries at present birth rates have been falling faster than mortality rates and the natural population increase has been continuously declining for the last fifteen years. In the period 1921–1925 Germany had an average natural increase of 8.8; in 1933 the increase was 3.5. In England and Wales, in the same periods, the natural increase fell from 8 to 2.4; in Austria from 6.4 to 0.9; in Belgium from 7 to 3.4; in the United States from 10.7 to 5.7.[31] The Census Bureau estimates that the population in this country gained 904,000, or 4 per cent, between 1930 and 1935, which represents "only a little more than one half of the 1920–1930 average of 1,665,000." This is indicative of a slowing up in population growth.[32]

But this is not the whole story. The foregoing figures are crude indices of births, deaths, and natural population increase which give no true indication of the capacity of a population for further growth. Human beings can become parents only during a part of their lives. The number of births in a year depends, in part, upon the age composition of the population. If, in any given year, the proportion of women of child-bearing age in the population is large the birth rate will tend to be higher than if the converse were true. Until very recently, the United States has had a high proportion of persons capable of becoming parents, owing first, to the huge immigration prior to the World War and second, to our high birth rate in previous years. But immigration to the United States has shrunken to a tiny stream and the number of elderly, infertile women is steadily gaining on the number of those in the fertile period of their lives. A continuously falling birth rate over a considerable period will thus tend to increase the number of the middle-aged and old in the population and decrease the number of children and of those in the child-bearing period (15–45 years).

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[31] Calculated from the birth rates and death rates given in the *Statistical Yearbook of the League of Nations*, 1934–1935.

[32] New York *Times*, February 5, 1936.

In the same way, the number of deaths in a year is dependent on the age composition of the population, and this last, in turn, on the birth rates in the past. If a population has an ever-growing proportion of elderly people its death rate will tend to rise, even although the expectation of life is steadily increasing.

As in certain other countries, what maintains the birth rate and the natural increase in the United States at present is not, as Dublin points out, "our inherent high reproductive vitality but rather the fact that the surviving descendants of a more highly reproductive generation are today swelling the ranks of middle life and participating in parenthood." This means that the excess of births over deaths in our country which, in 1933, was 6.4, offers no guaranty that further increase of population will continue or even that a stable population will be maintained. Dublin has estimated that population in the United States will be at a standstill about the year 1970 save for a small increment due to immigration. Indeed, he holds that if corrections for age composition, fertility, and mortality within the reproductive period were made, it would be found that the true rate of natural increase probably reached "the zero level" about 1930.[33]

The Capacity of Populations for Growth.

Robert R. Kuczynski has done valuable work [34] in discovering the inherent capacity for growth of populations in various countries. By working out the annual fertility rates for women in each year of age in any given population, combining these yearly rates and dividing the total by the number of women, he obtained the average number of children born to a woman in that country during the entire reproductive period. Now, since it is females who recruit the race, in any consideration of the capacity for growth of a population it is more convenient to eliminate male births and consider only female. As the ratio of male to female births in the offspring of mothers of different ages can readily be secured, the average fertility rate may then be multiplied by this ratio. In the Ukraine, for example, in 1926–1927 the total fertility rate of every 1,000 women who lived to the age of 50 was 5,134.628 children, with an average of 5.13. The proportion of girls in the total births was .484. Multiplying the average fertility rate (5.13) by this figure gives 2.49 as the average number of female children born to a Ukranian woman through her entire reproductive period. This figure Kuczynski calls the "Gross Reproduction Rate." [35]

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[33] "Outlook for Population Increase," *Publication of the American Sociological Society,* Vol. XXIV, May, 1930, pp. 108–109. This refined method of determining population growth was worked out by Dublin and Lotka.

[34] See his *Fertility and Reproduction,* (Falcon Press, Inc., New York, 1932), *passim.*

But all women do not live through the entire reproductive period (15–50) therefore account has to be taken of the probability of survival, if a time picture is to be obtained of the growth capacity of the population. Therefore, in addition to the gross reproduction rate, e.g., of women in the Ukraine, it is necessary to work out a life table for the female population based on the mortality rates then current. Only 733 out of every 1,000 girls born in that Soviet Republic survive to the age of sixteen and only 730 out of every thousand survive to age seventeen. By age forty-nine only 585 will survive. By reckoning the average number of offspring born to each woman from age fifteen (0.15) to age forty-nine (5.23) the total of 3,461.73 children per every 1,000 mothers is obtained. Dividing by 1,000 and eliminating male births, as before, the total of *female* births to each mother is found to be 1.68. This is the *net reproduction rate* in the Ukraine in 1926–1927 and is a far more refined and accurate index of the capacity for growth of the population than the crude figure secured by subtracting deaths from births. This net reproduction rate of 1.68 means that, if the Ukranian birth and mortality rates remained the same as in 1926–1927, every mother then born would be replaced in fifty years by 1.68 mothers. Clearly the population of the Ukraine is a growing one. A net reproduction rate of unity, one, means that every mother will be replaced by another—but no more.

In the long run, then, a net reproduction rate of one results in a stationary population, *if birth and death rates do not change.*[36]

Kuczynski has applied his refined methods of calculating the capacity for population growth to countries of northern and western Europe and later to countries of eastern and southern Europe. He estimates that the net reproduction rates in the first area in certain given years were as in the following table.[37]

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[35] See Enid Charles, *The Twilight of Parenthood* (W. W. Norton and Company, New York, 1934), pp. 66–67.

[36] See on this whole question Enid Charles, *op. cit.*, pp. 66–75, citing Kuczynski.

[37] Kuczynski, *The Balance of Births and Deaths* (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1928), Vol. I, pp. 50–53.

NORTHERN AND WESTERN EUROPE

Year	*Country*	*Net Reproduction Rates*
1926	Denmark	1.097
1926	Sweden	0.95
1922–1925	France	0.937
1921–1925	Finland	1.14
1926	England and Wales	0.88
1925	Germany	0.937

When these figures are scanned it appears that only Denmark and Finland have net reproduction rates above unity and these countries are steadily approaching a stabilized population. The other three countries are passing through a period of stationary populations and will, at some future time, enter upon a period of population decline. To be sure the birth rate in Germany rose sharply in 1934,[38] owing to the direct encouragement of marriages and births by the National Socialist (Nazi) government. But the reported birth rate for 1935 shows a decline.

The net reproduction rates in certain countries in eastern and southern Europe are on the whole distinctly higher than in the west. These rates for certain years and in selected countries are given in the table below [39] adapted from Kuczynski.

SOUTHERN AND EASTERN EUROPE

Year	*Country*	*Net Reproduction Rates*
1929	Russia	1.70
1929	Ukraine	1.40
1929	Bulgaria	1.30
1929	Hungary	1.20
1921–1922	Italy	1.40
1927	Poland	1.30
1928	Austria	0.80
1929	Czechoslovakia, West	0.95
1929	Latvia	0.90
1929	Estonia	0.65

[38] From 14.7 in 1933 to 18 in 1934.

[39] Robert R. Kuczynski, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 64.

It will be seen that Estonia, Czechoslovakia, West and Austria have net reproduction rates below unity and have entered upon a period of population decline. The figures for Italy refer to a period fifteen years past and are misleading. The crude birth rate in 1934 was 23.2, a decline of 6.5 from the average of 1921–1925. It is possible, as Kuczynski declared in 1931, that the population of Italy is still reproducing itself but if the fertility and mortality rates continue to develop as in the last ten years the population will no longer hold its own.

Owing to the fact that fertility has decreased much more than mortality in the United States since 1920, it is probable that the net reproduction rate in this country no longer exceeds unity and in certain States has fallen below that figure. Kuczynski has estimated the net reproduction rates for 21 States in the year 1919–1920. Even then the rate for New York was unity, for the State of Washington 0.97, for Oregon 0.94 and for California 0.85. In 1926 the *gross* reproduction rate for Montana was 0.91; therefore, its net rate must have been considerably lower to allow for deaths of mothers in the reproductive period.[40] It is entirely probable that the United States, together with many nations of Europe, has entered an era of stationary population, leading, years hence, to population decline.

Is a Growing Population Nationally Beneficial?

At this point the question naturally arises as to whether an increasing population is of benefit to a nation. This is a many-sided problem concerning which there are sharp differences of opinion at the present time. First may be considered the question of the *pressure of population upon the food supply.* Professor East estimates, from the evidence at hand, that the population of the world increased from less than 850,000,000 persons in 1800 to more than 1,700,000,000 in 1900. This means that the entire period of human life on earth prior to 1800, which has been roughly estimated to be half a million years, was required to produce a population of 850,000,000 persons, and that only a century was needed to double that population.[41] If the world population doubled every century—and an eminent population statistician of Australia estimates that the annual increase a few years ago was 1.16 per cent, which means a doubling in 60¼ years—what would be the effect on the world's supply of land and food? East cites Walter B. Pitkin's study,[42] which shows that, taking the army rations of civilized nations as a basis, the average adult needs approximately 1,000 pounds of dry foodstuffs every year. At the rate of natural increase in 1923 it follows that farmers must provide about 23,000,000,000 more pounds of food each year if the world is to be nourished. East has carefully estimated that between two and three acres of land are necessary to support each man. "Thus every season," he writes, "the tillers of the soil must prepare, plant, cultivate and harvest nearly 40 million acres more than they did the year before unless they can persuade mother earth to give up more of her bounties than has been her habit of yore." [43] Of course it must be kept in mind that not all persons are adults; a considerable percentage of any population is made up of infants and children. But even when this allowance is made, the situation is sufficiently disturbing. What is the apparent capacity of the earth to feed its teeming millions?

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[40] Kuczynski, "Births," *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1930), Vol. II, pp. 570–571.

[41] *Mankind at the Crossroads,* (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1923), pp. 66–67.

If the land area around the Arctic Circles be excluded, the world has a territory of about 33,000,000,000 acres. The International Institute of Agriculture at Rome has investigated the proportion of cultivated land to total area in the most populous countries, and has found it to be about forty per cent. This percentage is high, since the countries of densest populations are those with the most land under cultivation. Assuming, then, that this percentage is not far from representing the maximum limit of arable land, then the earth has at most 13,000,000,000 acres available for agriculture. How many people can this enormous area support? Obviously this depends upon a number of factors—a prolonged era of peace and prosperity, improved methods of agriculture, transportation and storage, and an increase in human efficiency. If all these favorable conditions are fulfilled, and if an allowance of 2.5 acres per person is made, over forty per cent of the arable land-surface of the earth, East estimates that a population of 5,200 millions can be supported on our globe. At the rate of population growth fifteen years ago this maximum would be reached in slightly over a century.[44]

This very sketchy account of the possibilities of food production throughout the world should not end without some reference to the

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[42] *Must We Fight Japan?* (The Century Company, New York, 1921).

[43] East, *op. cit.*, pp. 67–68. For the entire discussion of food supply that follows I am indebted to Professor East's excellent book.

[44] East, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

United States. The population increase in our country has been very rapid, due chiefly to the fact that its inhabitants have been blessed with rich natural resources and much fertile soil. When the first census was taken in 1790, the population of this new republic was only 4,000,000 people; when the fourteenth census was taken in 1920, it was almost 106,000,000. Dr. Raymond Pearl has plotted the curve of growth of the population during this period of 130 years, and its probable course in the future. The curve shows a progressively diminishing increase beginning about the year 1914.[45] Not far from the year 2100, the curve ceases to rise and becomes horizontal, which means that the point of population saturation will then have been reached in this country, and the death rate will equal the birth rate. The maximum population will then be not far from 200 million people. According to East, however, there will be a serious population pressure, i.e., growth of population beyond the food supply and land area, by the year 1980, unless deliberate restriction of births is resorted to in preference to Nature's method of killing off the weak and unfortunate by starvation or disease.

With such facts at the disposal of every intelligent person, it is difficult to see how anyone can sincerely oppose the dissemination of knowledge of scientific methods of preventing conception. To bring children into the world to grow up in dark, squalid, unsanitary homes, where the family members are crowded together in such wise as to render privacy and even decency impossible, seems on its face a profoundly unintelligent, unsocial, and immoral performance. Society gains little or nothing from future citizens reared under such unwholesome conditions; and the children themselves, born into homes almost totally unprovided with the means of rearing them into healthy, intelligent, moral manhood and womanhood, are in many instances mute witnesses against the ignorant parents who gave them birth and the social system which encourages such crimes against childhood.

Many well-meaning people believe that this crucial problem can be solved by attacking the economic end and striving to secure for each worker a living wage that will make it possible to rear large families in decent comfort. This is the position taken by Cardinal Hayes in a recent sermon in New York City. Far be it from the writer to minimize the importance of drastic economic reforms in our present industrial society. The need for securing to every laborer a hire that makes life worth living is real and urgent. But this reform will not of itself furnish a solution of the problem. Indeed, it might result in such thoughtless and care-free breeding as materially to hasten the day when the population of this country will have outgrown its means of subsistence and we shall be facing grave problems of over-population. In the energetic words of King:

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[45] East, *op. cit.*, p. 151. Citing Raymond Pearl and L. G. Reed, "On the Rate of Growth of the Population of the United States since 1790," in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences,* Vol. VI, 1920, pp. 275–288.

> To attempt to better the economic condition of the masses . . . without lowering their birth-rate is as hopeless a task as trying to stamp out typhoid fever while still supplying the people with water laden with the deadly germs. Within reasonable limits, a nation's permanent economic welfare, then, depends but little on whether the soil is rich or sterile, the mines productive or exhausted, but, on the contrary, it is based almost wholly on the question as to whether the masses of the people have passed over the deep but narrow gulf which separates the control of population by a standard of living from that condition in which it is limited only by the means of subsistence, *for it is the crossing of this gulf which substitutes reason in place of the animal instincts.*[46]

Like Professor East, Raymond Pearl feels some misgivings about the world's ability to go on indefinitely increasing both its population and its average standard of consumption or of living. Referring to the optimistic theory that there is no reason why production should not go on in the future as it has in the past Pearl comments:

> This view overlooks the fact that besides the human element involved in production, there is another of even greater importance which finally limits the process. It is, that the volume and the surface of the planet on which we live are strictly fixed quantities. This fact sets a limit, if no other does, to the indefinite projection of these straight lines of production.

The foregoing discussion of the world's productive capacity is intimately related to the problem of birth control, as already indicated. Unless the countries of Europe, the Americas, and Australia are ready to accept the conditions of population saturation that prevail in impoverished India, China, and to a scarcely less extent in Japan, they must not rely too optimistically upon the possibility of importing foods and increasing production indefinitely.

[46] Wilford I. King, *The Wealth and Income of the People of the United States,* (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1915), p. 246. Italics mine. By permission.

The harmful effects upon society of overpopulation are such menacing evils that they deserve further consideration. Most social writers are agreed that uncontrolled births are in a substantial degree responsible for poverty, overcrowding in tenements, juvenile delinquency, and family desertion. Furthermore, unrestricted breeding is a serious impediment to economic and social progress and is undoubtedly one factor making for the maintenance of war in civilized societies. Overcrowded countries are ever on the lookout for natural resources and outlets at the expense of their neighbors. An illuminating example is furnished by Italy at the present time—a country which has made war on ancient Ethiopia to secure land, raw materials, and markets to support its teeming population. The relation between a high birth rate among the poor and grinding poverty seems obvious enough. An examination of the family histories of the 100 neediest cases in New York City, recounted every year at the Christmas season in the New York *Times* to stimulate philanthropy, will reveal a high percentage of cases in which the size of the family was out of all proportion to the father's wages or the combined family income. In these family groups, there are from three to seven or eight children in the majority of cases, while the income would hardly support two in decent comfort.

Not only has the practice of birth control operated to prevent the monstrous overpopulation that is found in many countries of the Orient, with its clearly demonstrated social evils, but it has effected a steady decline in general death rates and in infant deaths. During the last decade or two, not only has there been a sharp decline in most advanced countries in the general mortality rate, but the fall of the infant death rate [47] has been most encouraging. In his presidential address to the Royal Statistical Society in 1917, the Registrar General of Births and Deaths for England and Wales gave some interesting facts concerning the decline of infant mortality in Europe. He declared that in Germany, between 1906 and 1913, the infant mortality rate declined 18 per cent; the birth rate 17 per cent. In England and Wales, the infant mortality rate also declined 18 per cent in the same period, whereas the birth rate fell only 11 per cent. Similar conditions existed in Norway, Sweden, and Denmark. In the United States, also, the fall in infant mortality has been striking. In the period from 1915 to 1932 the decline in the infant death rate was from 99.6 to 55.1—a decrease of 44.6 per cent.[48] When these ratios are contrasted with those of sixteenth-century England, the gain is seen to be enormous. In that century, a Lord Mayor of London, father of Dean Colet, the famous founder of St. Paul's School, had twenty-two children in thirty years, of whom only one lived to maturity. And this is no solitary instance, as family records show. Commenting on the huge child mortality rate of this and succeeding centuries, Dean Inge says: "Parents seem to have regarded this dismal procession of cradles and coffins as a dispensation of Providence, and bore lightly the loss of children for whom there was no room." [49] Even to-day it is not uncommon to see working parents, who are laboring to the limit of their strength to earn a bare livelihood for themselves and their children, also viewing with calm stoicism the death of babies who should never have been born.

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[47] This represents the number of deaths of infants, within the first year of life, per 1,000 births.

If a country can successfully avoid overpopulation, the average human life can be lengthened, and at the same time made more worth living. Drysdale estimates that in highly overpopulated countries like India, China, and Russia the *average* duration of life is not more than thirty-five years. Professor E. A. Ross estimates the expectation of life at birth in India at not more than twenty-three years. Since restriction of births began, the span of life in Great Britain has risen to over sixty years. In the United States in 1935 the span of life is estimated as sixty-five years. It is not unreasonable to suppose that the Psalmist's estimate of "three score years and ten" may be reached in future by the many, if reforms in industrial conditions and in provisions for public health can be realized. In the case of Great Britain, this would probably mean a birth and death rate of fourteen per thousand and a stationary population.[50]

Effect of Stationary and Declining Populations.

Up to this point evidence has been given to show that growing populations are not always beneficial to a country, that large birth rates may result in overpopulation beyond the means of subsistence, in high mortality rates, in a shortening of the expectation of life. But there are other aspects of the question that deserve consideration. Most of the warnings against overpopulation referred to above were written ten years ago or more. Since that time the birth rates in advanced countries have fallen very sharply, far more drastically than the death rates, which have declined relatively little in a decade. Thus the whole face of the problem has changed. Several of the leading nations of Europe already have stationary or declining populations and such is the case in the United States. In our own country, at least, and probably in others, there is no danger of population growth beyond the food supply if improved methods of agriculture are employed and if the system of distribution is made more equitable. Indeed, there is considerable recent evidence to the effect that man may vastly increase the products of the earth if he will but use what scientific knowledge already exists in regard to the chemical constituents of the soil, the employment of mechanical inventions in increasing heat and light as aids to growth, the systematic elimination of pests and parasites, and the selection of those species of plants and animals which are distinguished by great fertility. At a time when science is opening up visions of an era of plenty for all there are many who still think in terms of a "dialectic of scarcity." By the persistent and intelligent use of all the scientific knowledge that is available it is probable that the United States could support a growing population at a high level of comfort for some time to come. However, the economic system of price levels and distribution would need to be changed root and branch.

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[48] This refers to the original registration area of ten States including the District of Columbia and excluding Rhode Island.

[49] In Marchant (Editor), *The Control of Parenthood* (G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1920), p. 61.

[50] See Charles Drysdale's "Presidential Address at the Sixth International Neo-Malthusian and Birth Control Conference" (New York, 1925), in *Birth Control Review,* May, 1925, p. 141.

Another aspect of the question of tumbling birth rates and stationary or declining populations merits thoughtful examination. In 1933 the net reproduction rate in England and Wales was approximately 0.75. This represents with considerable accuracy a rate of growth to which the population is tending—a rate lower than unity that will in time result in a declining population. When all the children born at the earlier and higher level of birth rates have died, the population will approach a stable age composition and a stable rate of decrease. Kuczynski estimates that this will take place within a century. Indeed before the end of the century the effects of the old higher fertility rates would be insignificant. When a stable age composition will have been reached in England and Wales, and *if no change in birth and death rates occurs,* the population will be reduced by one fourth in each generation of about thirty years. This means that the present population of these islands, which is approximately 45,000,000 will be reduced to less than 6,000,000 in about 200 years! And if the net reproduction rate were to fall from 0.75 to 0.50 the population would be lessened by one half every thirty years. At the latter rate, in a period of 300 years, Enid Charles estimates that a population of 45,000,000 would be reduced to 45,000—"the size of a small English town." [51]

These estimates seem fantastic but are nevertheless deeply disturbing. Such an example of race suicide on the part of a great people may well give us pause. However, it is well to recall that such prophecies of future population decline take no account of the fact that mankind, being endowed with intelligence and power to forecast the future, may at any time exercise foresight and rational choice and decide to put an end to catastrophically falling birth rates by a deliberate increase in the size of families. To achieve such a desirable end two social efforts seem necessary: (1) an educational movement to acquaint youth and adults with the ultimate significance of net reproduction rates below unity and to stir in them a sense of responsibility for the future survival of their race; (2) to effect such a social reorganization as will render it much less hazardous and sacrificial for parents of moderate means to have three or four children if they so desire.

The disadvantages of a dwindling population are not exhausted in the menace of race suicide. Dublin and other students of population problems are pointing out that serious economic and social consequences are involved in decreasing national numbers. In the United States, especially, the industrial system has been geared to ever-growing numbers, and so, likewise, has the psychology of the American people, whose whole outlook is colored by their optimistic faith in expansion and growth. It can hardly be questioned that a declining population will tend to contract industry. In the words of Dublin, "manufacturers will hesitate to increase the size of their plants lest productive capacity outstrip demand. In the field of real estate the value of lands and buildings may tend to decrease. Fewer workers will be needed on farms and in factories, especially if improved mechanical processes are employed to meet the needs of a dwindling population." [52]

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[51] *The Twilight of Parenthood,* pp. 75–76.

[52] *The Population Problem and World Depression,* p. 11. Pamphlet published by the Foreign Policy Association, Inc. (New York, January, 1936.)

Nor is this all. When net reproduction rates fall steadily below unity, a change will occur in the age distribution of the population; there will be more middle-aged and elderly persons, fewer children and youths. Very possibly this condition will mean a more conservative people, less idealistic and far less inclined to attempt experiments in the fields of economics and government to promote the common welfare. On the whole it is youth who embarks on untried seas. But there is another aspect of the change in age composition which is more advantageous. When children become rare they will be more valuable; society will almost inevitably cherish each child, prevent its exploitation, build up its health, and secure to it as generous and useful education as it is capable of receiving. Then, too, with fewer youths to recruit the ranks of industry the tendency to throw men from forty to fifty into the industrial scrap heap will probably cease.

One more aspect of this question may be glanced at. The chief population reservoirs of our country are the vast farming areas of the West and South, where there are many impoverished States. Yet these commonwealths, especially in the South, have the highest birth rates in the country, while wealthy States in the East, Northwest and on the Pacific Coast have the lowest. Contrast the birth rates in 1932 in poor States like Alabama (23.5), New Mexico (28.7), North Carolina (24.0), South Carolina (23.8), with the birth rates in wealthy, industrialized Massachusetts (15.9), Illinois (14.4), Michigan (16.4), and California (13.1). The impoverished farming States cannot give their children to the same degree the benefits of sound elementary and secondary education, free clinical and dental services, and other advantages which children in more prosperous States enjoy. Yet it is precisely the handicapped citizens of many farming areas that have been recruiting [53] the States of dwindling populations, and, it is to be feared, lowering the quality of the population. The question of equalizing the opportunities of citizens in the poor agricultural States with those of the rich industrial commonwealths should give increasing concern to the federal government.[54]

Summarizing the foregoing discussion, it may be said that certain grave disadvantages may attend unrestricted population growth. We have only to consider the dense populations of India, China, Egypt, and Japan to realize what these evils are. Poverty, malnutrition, ignorance, high morbidity and mortality rates are the bitter fruits of overpopulation. Governments of overpopulated states which are unable to feed their peoples, desperately seek outlets to land and markets by resort to war. Japan and Italy are striking examples of this militaristic policy. On the other hand declining populations may mean the slow, steady extinction of a fine people. Rapidly falling birth rates over a long period of time will bring about a drastic transformation of a population in such wise that the aged are more numerous than the young, that conservation seems more important than experimentation, that prudence and caution take precedence of idealistic ventures to increase the joy of living. It would seem that mankind, guided by intelligent foresight, might find a middle path between the miseries of overpopulation and the long but certain road to race suicide. This is the well-considered view of an expert on population problems.

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[53] Since the depression began the population trend has set back to the farms.

[54] See Dublin, *op. cit.*, pp. 11–13.

> The whole purpose and spirit of the birth-control movement is to bring the fundamentally important social interest of population increase under the same control of intellect, reason, foresight, and will on which we pride ourselves in every other great department of life, and to make this human, scientific resource just as available to the less fortunate and less prosperous members of society as it has been or may be, to those whose lot happens to be more comfortable. There is, of course, the possibility that the present decline in the rate of population growth may threaten actual underpopulation. But the surest way to forestall this result is to establish the social practice of regulating production intelligently and purposefully. Society should then be able to set up new incentives and conventions to reverse the trend.[55]

TOPICS FOR REPORTS

1. Gross and Net Reproduction Rates: Population Decline.
   Enid Charles, *The Twilight of Parenthood* (W. W. Norton and Company, New York, 1934), Chs. II, III.
2. Fertility Rates in Western and Northern Europe.
   Robert R. Kuczynski, *The Balance of Births and Deaths* (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1928), Chs. II–IV.
3. Population Growth in the United States.
   Louis I. Dublin, editor. *Population Problems in the United States and Canada* (Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1926), Chs. II, III. (Publications of the Pollak Foundation for Economic Research.)

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[55] Henry Pratt Fairchild, "The Scientific Approach to Birth Control," *Birth Control Review,* Vol. III, No. 5, January, 1936.

4. Causes of the Declining Birth Rate.
    - S. J. Holmes, *The Trend of the Race* (Harcourt, Brace and Company, New York, 1921), pp. 143–179.
5. War and Population.
    - Harold Cox, *The Problem of Population* (G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1923), Ch. III.
    - Margaret Sanger, *Woman and the New Race* (Brentano's, New York, 1920), Ch. XIII.

CHAPTER XIV

THE PROBLEM OF BIRTH CONTROL
(*continued*)

THE DIFFERENTIAL BIRTH RATE

IN the last chapter, the menace of national overpopulation together with the grave disadvantages of declining populations were considered. But the problem of a steadily falling birth rate presents several aspects other than those discussed. From at least one of these viewpoints the decline in births appears to be a serious detriment to society. Social investigators have ample evidence to show that the declining birth rate is *differential,* i.e., it is lowest not among the ignorant, the inefficient, the needy, but among the intelligent, the prosperous and the able. For example, a table of the comparative fertility among classes in England in 1911 shows a birth rate of 119 per thousand married males under fifty-five years in the upper and middle class, 153 among skilled workmen and 213 among unskilled workmen. If these groups be classified according to particular professions and occupations, the contrast in the birth rate, and also the infant death rate, is even more striking. The table follows: [1]

England and Wales 1911	*Births per 1,000 Married Males under 55 Years*	*Death of Infants under 12 Months per 1,000 Born*
Medical practitioners	103	39
Solicitors	100	41
Clergymen, Church of England	101	48
Dock laborers	231	172
Earthenware makers	181	172
Costers and hawkers	175	196

If 100 be taken as the general population fertility of England, a table of comparative fertility, *which referred only to women of child-bearing*

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[1] From Harold Cox, *The Problem of Population* (G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1923), p. 117. By permission.

age would show at the top wives of coal-miners, with a rate of 126.4. Next come wives of agricultural laborers, with a rate of 113.4; of boilermakers, 110.1; of farmers, 100.5; while at the bottom of the scale are wives of Nonconformist ministers, 79.8; Church of England clergymen, 72; teachers, 70.3; and doctors, 64.7.[2]

Unquestionably, economic status has a determining effect on the size of families. In his study of selected cities of Europe, Dr. Jacques Bertillon, for many years chief statistician of Paris, found sharp differentials in the birth rate in the wealthy and the poor quarters of these cities, as indicated in the following table.[3]

ANNUAL BIRTHS PER 1,000 WOMEN, AGED FIFTEEN TO FIFTY YEARS, IN DIFFERENT ECONOMIC STRATA

Classification	*Paris*	*Berlin*	*Vienna*	*London*
Very poor quarters	108	157	200	147
Poor quarters	95	129	164	140
Comfortable quarters ...	72	114	155	107
Very comfortable quarters	65	96	153	107
Rich quarters	53	63	107	87
Very rich quarters	34	47	71	63
Average	80	102	153	109

In the United States, conditions are much the same. The largest families are found among the lowest income groups, where lack of economic and educational opportunities has resulted in ignorance and thoughtless, uncontrolled breeding; while the smallest families are almost invariably found in the educated, far-sighted, and high-income groups. Of 454 men selected at random from those who subscribed to the *Harvard Alumni Bulletin* in 1925, only 379 were married. These men had a total of 793 children. The average income of the entire group was $18,566.74.[4] An examination of these figures shows that the married Harvard alumni and their wives are little more than reproducing themselves, and that nearly 17 per cent of the alumni are unmarried. In his study of the birth rate among graduates of Harvard and Yale Universities, Phillips finds that the number of children per married graduate has fallen from 3.25 in the decade 1850–60 to a little over two in the decade 1881–1890. A later study of the birth rate among Harvard graduates of the classes 1891–1900 showed 1.89 children per fertile marriage and 1.71 per graduate.[5] Add to this the results of the study made by J. McKeen Cattell [6] of 643 American men of science. The investigation revealed that the families from which the scientific men had sprung had an average of 4.7 children, whereas the scientific men who were married and whose families were complete had an average of only 2.3 children, including all the children born, whether living or not. Needless to say these men, of marked intellectual ability, together with their wives, are barely reproducing themselves; for it must not be overlooked that death will probably claim some of the offspring before they marry and reproduce, and also a considerable proportion of the children of these scientists will not marry.

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[2] A. Newsholme, *The Elements of Vital Statistics,* p. 100, citing Stevenson, T. H. C., M. D. *The Decline of the Birth-Rate,* p. 15.

[3] H. G. Duncan, *Race and Population Problems,* p. 317, citing Newsholme.

[4] New York *Times,* January 15, 1926.

One of the most significant of the recent studies of the birth rate decline in the educated middle class is that of Professors Baber, formerly of the University of Illinois, and Ross of Wisconsin.[7] This investigation was restricted to completed American families,[8] with parents still living, and to the families of their parents. Not only college graduates, but all educational and occupational groups were represented. Embraced within the study were 750 families of a generation ago and 2,500 of their descendants of the present generation. The families of the older generation had an average of 5.44 children, while those of the younger had an average of 3.35. But since this study was made only of families with children, the average is undoubtedly too high in both instances. All childless families were automatically excluded from the investigation; and, in the case of the older generation, it was impossible to learn how much the average (5.44) was lowered by that fact. But the infertile families in the present generation were known, and if they were included in securing the average, it would fall to 2.81 children per marriage. Commenting on these facts the authors say:

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[5] *Harvard Graduates Magazine,* Vol. XXXIV, March, 1926, pp. 285–294.

[6] In *Scientific Monthly,* Vol. IV, 1917, pp. 252–257.

[7] "Changes in the Size of American Families in One Generation," *University of Wisconsin Studies in the Social Sciences,* No. 10, 1924. Madison, Wisconsin. By permission of the authors.

[8] Those in which the mother was forty-five years of age or older.

> This is indeed startling. Five years ago a leading statistician calculated that with existing death and marriage rates nearly four children per married couple (3.7 to be more nearly exact) were required to replace the preceding generation. In this statement he has been supported by other experts, who further maintain that there has been no substantial change in the figure in the last five years. Even making more allowance for a slightly lower death rate for the people of our study than for the general population, careful figuring (including consideration of comparative marriage rates) does not seem to justify a figure lower than 3.6 as the minimum number of children per married couple necessary to keep stationary that portion of the population included in our study.[9]

As stated in a previous chapter, the graduates of women's colleges are held to be the worst offenders with regard to the birth rate; and, indeed, there is no denial of the fact that this group of women, highly selected on the basis of intelligence, is very far from perpetuating itself. Not only is it true, as we have seen, that probably not more than 60 per cent of Eastern college women are married fifteen years after graduation, but among the group who have married there is a high proportion of sterile marriages and a low birth rate. This condition has led R. J. Sprague to raise the question as to whether the woman's college is a dysgenic influence:

> Is the woman's college as now conducted a force which acts for or against the survival of the race which patronizes it? Whatever intellectual and moral superiority a race may have, it needs also a certain amount of reproductive impulse in order to remain on the earth. No culture, art, science, or morality can save it unless it produces about three matured children per married, child-bearing couple, and any race which does not do this is doomed to extinction.[10]

But it is pertinent to inquire whether in reality these low birth rates should be ascribed to the baneful effects of college education, or whether they do not characterize the entire intelligent middle class from which college students are largely drawn. Ross and Baber's study, previously referred to, throws some light on this crucial point. It reveals that, of 1,420 men of the present generation whose families are completed, those who had received only high school education had an average of 2.73 children (including infertile families), whereas the men of college education had 2.88 children, and the men who had advanced to graduate

[9] Baber and Ross, *loc. cit.*

[10] "Education and Race Suicide," *Journal of Heredity,* April, 1915.

study had 2.79 children. In the case of 1,183 women of the present generation, the figures show slightly lower averages for the college and graduate groups, when compared with the women whose education had ended with the high school. The group who had received only elementary education reveals a markedly higher average. The figures follow: [11]

Education	*Totals*	*Average No. of Children Born, Including Infertile Marriages*
None	——	——
Elementary	451	3.49
High School	459	2.67
College	251	2.51
Graduate	22	2.31

It appears, then, that of 1,420 men, those who had had the privilege of college education and graduate study had actually a higher average of children than men with only high school education; whereas of 1,183 women, those who were college graduates had an average of only .16 children less than women whose education did not extend beyond high school. The women who had had the benefit of graduate study (only 22 in number) showed an average number of children .36 less than the average of the high school women. These figures seem very significant; and although they do not establish the theory that a declining birth rate is characteristic of the entire educated middle class, with or without college education, they certainly support it.

With a view to throwing some light on this socially important question the author sent out questionnaires, through her students, to a large number of married college women and to their married women relatives and friends of the same social class who had not been to college. Replies were received from 472 college wives and an equal number of non-college wives. The results showed that the college women had had an average of 1.48 children, their non-college friends and relatives 1.77. But an analysis of the ages of the women in the two groups disclosed that the non-college group was on the average three years older than the college group and had been married on the average 4.4 years longer. The facts of age difference, the longer period of married life, and the further fact that the college women were on an average 1.4 years older at marriage would fully account for the higher average number of children (.29) of the non-college group. The conclusion that clearly emerges from this study is the small difference in the size of family in each group—a difference which would probably disappear if the two groups were exactly comparable in age and years married. Unquestionably the deliberate restriction of births is common in both groups.[12]

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[11] Baber and Ross, *loc. cit.,* adapted from p. 67.

The author has received support for the theory that small families are characteristic of the entire educated middle class and are in but slight degree a consequence of college education from two sources. A study [13] of the fertility of the middle class of England, with particular attention paid to the factors of age at marriage and duration of marriage, seemed, in the opinion of the writers, to furnish no justification for the current theory that college education in itself is a potent cause of limitation of families. The authors declared that "paying attention to the errors of sampling, there are no differences between the size of the family of a non-college mother and that of a college mother which cannot be explained by a difference of age at marriage and duration of marriage." Since the English group was socially homogeneous, consisting of college mothers and their near relatives who had not gone to college, the writers' conclusion seems justified that "the alleged prejudicial effects of higher education *per se* upon the capacity or inclination of women to bear children do not exist." [14]

Further support for the theory is furnished by Banker's analysis of the study made by Professor Holmes of "The Size of College Families . . ." [15] The conclusion of Holmes, based upon an examination of the families of grandparents and parents of students in the University of California, was to the effect that "education has a potent effect in reducing family size whether it is possessed by the male or the female parent." [16] The figures further showed that higher education of the mother "has a somewhat closer association, than the education of the father." The writer also holds that the factor of age at marriage is important. The relative youth of the common-school mothers explains in part their greater fecundity.

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[12] See article by the author in the *American Journal of Sociology,* March, 1936.

[13] Brown, Greenwood, and Wood, "The Fertility of the English Middle Classes," *Eugenics Review,* Vol. XII, 1920, pp. 158–211.

[14] *Ibid.,* p. 179.

[15] *Journal of Heredity,* Vol. XV, October, 1924, pp. 407–415.

[16] *Ibid.,* p. 410.

Using Holmes's figures, Banker brings out some suggestive points.[17] He shows that the mean number of children of high-school mothers, mated with fathers of all types of education (common-school, high-school and college), shows a far larger differential, when compared with the mean number of children of mothers of common-school education, also mated with fathers of all types of education, than it does when compared with the mean of college mothers mated with fathers of the different types. The mean number of children of the three groups follow:

Common-school mothers	4.03
High-school mothers	3.38
College mothers	3.23

It will be seen, as Banker points out, that "the decline in fecundity from the common-school mother to the high-school mother is over four times the decline from the latter to the college mother. To put it in another way, the high-school mother is 16 per cent less fertile than the common-school mother while the college mother is only 4 per cent less fertile than the high-school mother." [18] There is no reason to suppose that the date of the high-school girl's marriage is materially delayed by her school course, or her fertility reduced because of it. High-school girls are graduated between the ages of sixteen and eighteen.[19] Therefore, the hypothesis of the relative youth of common-school mothers does not adequately explain the marked disparity between the mean number of their offspring and that of high-school mothers. If corrections for duration of marriage could be made, it is Banker's opinion that the slight disparity in the mean number of children of high-school and college mothers would be negligible, while the more marked and probably more significant difference between the means of common-school and high-school mothers would remain. It is, then, the group of high-school mothers that furnishes the chief problem. In view of these facts, Banker concludes that "education and especially formal, college education, has little or nothing to do with the declining birth-rate, that the correlations between education and fecundity which have been so greatly exploited are spurious or rather that they are simply mutual correlations with a *tertium quid* and are not directly related."[20] He further ventures the suggestion that if data concerning the income per head in these three types of families were available, we might find "an even more consistent correlation with fecundity than is now evident between fecundity and education. It is highly improbable that education in itself is sterilizing our population, and it is time we made search for other factors in the phenomenon."[21]

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[17] "Education and Fecundity," *Journal of Heredity,* Vol. XVI, February, 1925, pp. 57–59.

[18] *Ibid.,* p. 58.

[19] Eighty-seven and one-half per cent of women marry after the age of nineteen, according to the census of 1920.

While cordially agreeing in the main with Mr. Banker's conclusions, the author desires to point out that it makes little difference in the eugenic result whether education *per se* causes the disparity in the mean number of children of high-school and college mothers on the one hand and common-school mothers on the other, or whether education is an indirect causative factor by raising the age of marriage and the parents' standard of living. In either case, there would remain a significant disparity, alarming to eugenists. This is not to maintain that education *is* an important factor in bringing about this difference in living standards, but to suggest its possibility.

The Differential Birth Rate in Families on Relief.

Another aspect of the present differential birth rate challenges consideration. Several studies were made in 1935, when the United States was still suffering from prolonged economic depression, all of which showed that families receiving public or private relief had a markedly higher birth rate than non-relief families. In a recent study[22] records for 8,000 families belonging to the groups designated as unskilled laborers, skilled laborers, and the white-collar group were tabulated so as to show the relationship between birth rate, economic and social class, and change in economic status in the four-year period 1929–1932. It was found that the birth rate in families *without employed workers* was 197 per 1,000 married women fifteen to forty-four years of age, as compared with 154 in families having only part-time workers and 134 in families with one or more workers on full time. It appears, then, that "the families without any employed workers in 1932 had a birth rate *during the depression*

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[20] "Education and Fecundity," p. 59.

[21] *Ibid.*

[22] Sydenstricker, Edgar and Perrott, G. St. J., "Sickness, Unemployment and Differential Fertility," *Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly,* XII, No. 2, April, 1934, pp. 126–133.

48 per cent higher than those which had one or more full-time workers in 1932."[23]

A further tabulation was made of the data of families in four cities with incomes in 1932 of less than $1,200. This study was made to determine the birth rate in families on relief and in those not in receipt of relief. It was found that the families receiving relief had a birth rate of 210 per 1,000 married women of fertile age as against a birth rate of 137 in families not on relief. Thus the average yearly birth rate in this low income class was actually 53 per cent higher in families receiving relief than in non-relief families. Furthermore, the investigators found a distinct correlation between high fertility and "inability to succeed in the severe competition for jobs brought about by the depression." In the groups characterized by unemployment and low income was found a high illness rate, increased malnutrition among children, and the highest birth rates. The writers conclude their report with the statement, "Whatever the broad implications of the findings may be, it is evident that a high birth rate during the depression prevailed in families which could least afford, from any point of view, to assume this added responsibility."[24]

The conclusion to be drawn from this and similar studies seems clear and unavoidable. There are irresponsible persons in every society, ignorant, shiftless, and with weak inhibitions, who should be encouraged and assisted—not hindered as at present—in drastically limiting the size of their families.

IS THE DIFFERENTIAL BIRTH RATE A CAUSE FOR ALARM?

On its face the differential birth rate appears to be a cause for grave concern, and has evoked sharp warnings from social statisticians in recent years. These men point out that it is far more advantageous to society that large numbers of children should be born to intelligent, prosperous, and responsible citizens, well fitted to nurture and educate their offspring, than to parents engaged in a struggle for existence which affords little time or opportunity to acquire even the fundamentals of intelligent parenthood. Conversely, they argue that, if a low birth rate is socially detrimental, how much more is it so when it is confined chiefly to the educated class, whose abilities are confidently held to be precisely those that should be transmitted to the next generation, while the high birth rate among unskilled and untutored laborers quite destroys the social balance by flooding our cities with children of undesirable heredity and defective nurture and training.

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[23] *Ibid.*, p. 132.
[24] *Ibid.*, p. 133.

Let us examine these facts and theories as impartially as we may. At first glance the situation seems alarming. But there are certain considerations to be kept in mind that are frequently overlooked by statisticians. In the first place, it is highly unscientific, even absurd, to assume that all the useful, gifted, and desirable citizens are to be found in the ranks of the prosperous business and professional classes and all the undesirables within the ranks of wage-earners. There are too many instances of highly gifted individuals springing from the humblest and most crippling circumstances for intelligent men and women to adopt this easy theory. Social history makes clear that the production of the talented and the fit is not a monopoly of any class. To be sure, there is reliable evidence that a much higher proportion of gifted children come from families of the professional, semi-professional and business groups than from the groups of skilled and unskilled labor. Terman's admirably thorough and scientific study of 643 exceptionally gifted children in the California public schools showed that a great preponderance of these children came from the professional and commercial classes. Thus in the case of 560 fathers whose occupations were known, it was found that the professional fathers furnished 29.1 per cent of the children, although this group constitutes only 2.9 per cent of the population of Los Angeles and San Francisco. Similarly, the public service group of fathers furnished 4.5 per cent of the children, although they constituted only 3.3 per cent of the population. The commercial group, with a proportion of 36.1 per cent of the population, furnished 46.2 per cent of the gifted children. On the other hand, the industrial group (skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled labor), although making up 57.7 per cent of the population, furnished only 20.2 per cent of the gifted children.[25] Obviously, the laboring class is not furnishing its quota of children of exceptional intellectual abilities.

When, however, we consider the deprivations of the children of the industrial group with respect to cultured and stimulating home environment, intelligent parental guidance and wholesome neighborhood influences, and when we further consider the handicap of economic pressure, which necessitates out-of-school paid employment for many of these children, perhaps it is matter for surprise that slightly over one fifth of the gifted children sprang from this class. Moreover, it is well to remember that no set of intelligence tests yet devised can claim to be a test of "pure" or innate intelligence apart from those environing conditions that determine behavior, attitudes, dispositions, and tastes from the hour of birth; and no scientific psychologist maintains that they are accurate and entirely reliable tests of inborn abilities. The most that can be claimed for intelligence tests is that they are the best measures yet devised for determining the quality of native mental capacities. It would be, indeed, a confident believer in the prior importance of heredity in determining mental traits who would deny that greatly superior home environment, more highly educated and trained parents, better neighborhood conditions, and more leisure had influenced favorably the showing made by the non-industrial class in this investigation. How much these improved conditions would raise the proportion of gifted children in the industrial group no one, of course, can say. Possibly the gain would be slight, since Terman points out that the differences in the proportion of highly endowed children in the various classes extend down to the youngest groups between the ages of two and five years.[26] These small children would possibly be less influenced by unfavorable home conditions and education than would their older brothers and sisters. Yet it should not be overlooked that psychologists to-day are attaching more and more importance to the earliest years of life as powerful determinants of dispositions, tastes, and interests, no less than of behavior.[27]

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[25] Lewis M. Terman, *Genetic Studies of Genius* (Stanford University Press, 1925), Vol. I, pp. 62–63.

But even if it could be demonstrated (and it certainly has not been) that the percentage of intellectually superior children in the industrial group would not be appreciably increased by a substantial improvement in their environment from birth, yet the fact that slightly more than 20 per cent of highly gifted children sprang from this class should make us pause before deciding that the present differential birth rate is too grave a social evil. This is, of course, not to say that the high birth rate among the laboring class is beneficial either to the laborers or to society as a whole, but only to point out that this group is not wholly lacking in abilities of a high order and furnishes recruits to the more gifted and highly trained group in every generation.

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[26] Terman, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 43.

[27] John Watson, "What Is Behaviorism?" in *Harper's Magazine*, May, 1926.

Another point which it is well to hold in mind in attempting to reach a judgment concerning whether or not our present differential birth rate is cause for alarm is the fact that, despite all public health measures yet inaugurated, the death rate among the poor is relatively very high. If a family grows in numbers far beyond its means for food, clothing, and shelter, Nature steps in and balances matters by means of poverty, undernourishment, sickness, and death. The infant death rate under such circumstances is tragically high, as the studies of the Federal Children's Bureau in Manchester, Fall River, and New Bedford abundantly show.[28] However, improved public health work will steadily reduce this mortality rate, and thus remove one safeguard against a high birth rate among the underprivileged.

Finally, it should be remembered that all measures for increased control of life forces are initiated among the more thoughtful groups and gradually make themselves felt among the ignorant and relatively undisciplined. History shows this to be the course of progress in all ages and all climes. That contraceptive methods are already known to and used by skilled and highly paid workers is evidenced by the fall in the birth rate in that group. America supplies little or no data on this question, but there is evidence in European records to sustain this theory. In the city of Stockholm, Sweden, where use of contraceptive methods has been permitted to all classes since the World War, Dr. Karl Edin has found the following results:

> That the fertility of the upper classes has increased with the income declared in the census: Couples having an income of at least 10,000 Swedish crowns in 1920 had a birth rate 50 per cent above the rate for couples with an income less than 4,000 crowns, and yet even this last-mentioned group had a birth rate perceptibly higher than that of the working class, especially among young couples.[29]

Dr. Friedrich Burgdorfer, who is an internationally known authority, reached similar conclusions ten years later with respect to birth rates in German cities. He states:

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[28] See *ante*, Ch. IX.

[29] *Proceedings*, World Population Conference (Geneva, 1927), p. 205.

> On the basis of statistics taken from the income tax, I have recently been able to prove that today the number of children of families with large incomes is not diminishing but increasing. While on the average, in large German cities, for every 100 married taxpayers in the income group (under 1,500 reichsmarks) there are only 96 children, the number increased from income group to income group, until the largest percentage was found in the highest income group (over 50,000 reichsmarks) with 140 children for every 100 married taxpayers.[30]

The two significant points in these reports are, first, the fact that birth rates rise with income in the cities studied, and, second, that the low-income groups are rather drastically limiting the size of their families now that they have access to contraceptive information. There seems little reason to doubt that if this knowledge were scientifically given to all classes in every country the results would not greatly differ from those in Sweden and Germany.

For the reasons discussed above, then, it would seem wise not to adopt an alarmist attitude toward the matter of our present selective birth rate. As Dublin says:

> There has always been a differential birth rate, and a replacement of one group of people above by another, equally good, from below. In all ages men have raised themselves above their inherited station in life and have occupied the seats of the mighty, left vacant by those considered their superiors, who have neglected or have been incapable of performing their highest obligation to society, namely, parenthood. In all fairness, we must critically examine the current point of view and shift the emphasis in our population discussion from a glorification of the upper strata to a more generous recognition of the inherent worth of the great mass of mankind.[31]

This view receives support from Sir Arthur Newsholme, English expert in public health. He writes:

> But, it may be suggested, the differences between rich and poor are largely inherent, and are therefore more or less irremovable. That there are essential differences in family qualities is undoubted; the doubt is as to the social distribution of these superior mental and physical qualities. *Neither mental nor physical superiorities are a class characteristic; statistics appearing to point*

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[30] *Bulletin,* International Population Union (September, 1930), p. 12. Quoted by Guy Irving Burch in an article entitled "Encouraging Evidence from Europe," *Birth Control Review,* New Series II, No. 7, April, 1935.

[31] Louis Dublin, *Population Problems in the United States and Canada,* p. 15, publication of the Pollak Foundation for Economic Research (Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1926). By permission.

> *to this conclusion are never free from the errors due to varying environment, ante-natal and post-natal.* The only statement that is certainly true is that both initial intellectual superiority and physical superiority are a function of stock and not necessarily of class. It may, of course, be argued that the best stock naturally comes to the top, and so forms the upper class, a view which assumes that the impediments to "rising" for a large proportion of the total young are not sufficiently great to prevent the success of potential talent.[32]

This last statement deserves emphasis because nearly all psychologists who stress the importance of heredity hold the theory that talent cannot be held down. They ignore or minimize the disadvantages attending poverty and the fact that a gifted child in circumstances of great deprivation may not be endowed with the self-confidence and the sheer fighting qualities necessary to climb to success on the shoulders of his family.

But, even though there is a large measure of truth in the statements of Dublin and Newsholme, it seems idle to ignore or deny the fact that our present differential birth rate *is* socially disadvantageous. If greatly improved opportunities for living and for education could be secured to the unskilled working classes, it is doubtful if these groups could furnish to society so high a proportion of gifted leaders of thought and action as do the selected professional and business groups. But this is not all. Even if the native endowments of the unskilled laboring class were fully equal to those of the professional group, it yet remains true, as we have seen, that, as conditions are at present, the families in the low-paid labor class can by no means surround their children with the cultural, stimulating influences that the offspring of professional families receive almost with their mother's milk. There is a social and cultural heredity, no less than a biological one, and in this respect the children of uneducated day laborers are largely disinherited. While our differential birth rate may not be a cause for such serious concern as some eugenists would have us believe, neither does it justify a cheerful indifference. Handicapped children, with meager opportunities to discover and develop their talents, cannot readily fill the depleted ranks of the cultured and low birth rate groups.

Therefore, it seems socially desirable that married couples of sound health, broad education, disinterested social ideals, and high standards of life should have larger families. At present they are not nearly perpetuating themselves, if the estimate of statisticians is correct that from 3.7 to 4 children per married pair are necessary merely to replace the preceding generation. Some children die and some do not marry, so that a husband and wife with but two children can hardly hope to perpetuate themselves or do their part in maintaining even a stationary population. It is this condition which is very properly a matter of solicitude to eugenists, to students of the family and to population experts. What can be done to improve the situation?

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[32] *Vital Statistics,* p. 110. Italics mine. Quoted by permission of the publishers, D. Appleton Co., New York, 1926.

Outstanding eugenists like Dr. Ellsworth Huntington [33] urge that intelligent young people in colleges and universities need instruction in genetics, eugenics, the family, demography, or the science of population, and other related subjects, to be taught in connection with established courses in biology, sociology, economics, history, etc. Indeed he declares that since heredity and reproduction "are of such universal interest to boys and girls . . . eugenic principles should be kept in view in any sort of biological or physiological study, especially in the high school." [34] A nation-wide investigation might well be made to determine how far young men and women in higher institutions are being instructed in these fields, not only theoretically but with practical application to problems of population and of the family. A small, preliminary investigation of the courses of study of ten outstanding women's colleges in the United States, recently made by the author, disclosed that only one college offered a course in eugenics together with genetics and only two others a course in genetics. However, six colleges included in their curricula a course in heredity, and in several instances this was applied to eugenics. The history and problems of the family, or the "sociology of the family," appeared in the offerings of seven out of the ten colleges and population problems in only four. Clearly these leading colleges are not yet meeting Dr. Huntington's standards in the matter of enlightening their students in an important field of knowledge.

At this point, however, a question obtrudes itself. Will courses emphasizing eugenic principles, the indispensable services of the family to society, and the social importance of high birth rates in the superior class increase the marriage rate among college graduates and stimulate them to bear and rear numerous offspring? No dogmatic answer can be given to this crucial question, but it may be suggested that such a desirable outcome of the study of these subjects seems more than a little dubious. Men and women marry and have children under the impulse of deep emotional drives, not because they have studied the harmful effects of a differential birth rate in society. And they limit the size of their families precisely because they have intelligent foresight of the needs of children for medical and dental care, for broad and sound education, and for vocational preparation before being launched in the world. Vigorous scepticism regarding the favorable effects of eugenic education upon low birth rates has been expressed by Dr. Raymond Pearl in an address before the Sixth International Neo-Malthusian and Birth Control Conference in 1925:

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[33] President of the American Eugenics Society.

[34] E. Huntington, *Tomorrow's Children,* pp. 69–70 (John Wiley and Sons, Inc., New York, 1935). By permission.

> My fourth, and final point, is that the efforts of the eugenists to correct the evils of the differential birth rate, by endeavoring to induce the socially, economically, and in some part biologically, superior classes to reproduce more freely, as a sort of transcendental social duty, has not met with any statistically discernible success, and in my opinion is not likely to. . . . As was recently pointed out editorially in England: "A man may be induced by patriotic motives to die for his country, but hardly to procreate children for her, unless he can be convinced that those children will find places to fill at least as good as that he occupies. Rhetoric about race suicide, the decline of the empire, and so on, will never be accepted by the potential parent as a substitute for an economic guarantee." [35]

The above statement contains a suggestion as to another mode of approach to the problem of raising the low birth rates among the physically and mentally superior class—the economic. If society were concerned enough about the matter it could probably find ways of helping superior families of moderate income to have more children. Dr. Huntington has suggested several methods for removing the economic handicap imposed by large families. One is the scheme whereby wages and salaries are determined by the number of children in the family—the family allowance plan of France and Belgium. But Huntington holds that when this family allowance is under public auspices it may be a "eugenic menace" rather than an aid, since the families who receive the additional payment are not selected according to eugenic standards.[36]

[35] "The Differential Birth Rate," *Birth Control Review,* October, 1925, pp. 301–302.

[36] Ellsworth Huntington, *Tomorrow's Children,* pp. 70–73.

For this reason he prefers a system of family allowances under private auspices, in which it is possible to choose for benefits married pairs who give promise of having superior children. Thus a eugenically selective process would be introduced. He cites the case of missionaries, whose salaries are adjusted to the size of their families, as an example of the beneficial results which follow the payment of allowances to a gifted group. Missionaries' families tend to be larger than those of other professional groups. A private system of family allowances should work out an adequate method of selecting its beneficiaries, on the basis of the high qualities of the parents and their forebears, and provide a "sliding scale" of payments according to the family income, with *increased* allowances for each additional child up to the fifth or more. Another method of economic aid to parents would be by increasing the amount of income tax exemption for children and making this exemption progressively larger as the size of the family increases. Also Huntington suggests that the exemption for children should not cease when they reach the age of eighteen but should continue until their education is completed.

Another scheme whereby young married persons may be aided in having larger families is suggested by Huntington. This consists in "creating a new social consciousness such that the parents and relatives of high-grade young people feel a definite responsibility for making it financially possible for the young people to marry and have children at a reasonably early age." [37] The author favors the adoption by far-sighted parents, grandparents—even uncles and aunts—of a plan whereby safe investments over a period of years would provide for the expenses of grandchildren, nieces, and nephews.

A further aid to motherhood favored by Huntington consists in the organization of coöperative enterprises in cities which would release mothers from constant homework and attendance on little children. Such would be coöperative nurseries where mothers take turns in caring for groups of children, coöperative laundries, kitchen and house-cleaning establishments. The author wisely holds that "parenthood, and especially motherhood, must be made a pleasure and a privilege instead of the stern and painful discipline which it now is in far too many cases." [38]

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[37] Huntington, *op. cit.,* p. 74. By permission of the publishers, John Wiley and Sons, Inc., New York.

[38] *Ibid.,* p. 82. By permission.

All these methods of increasing the birth rate in the superior groups can only be initiated when an enlightened public clearly envisages the consequences of a declining population and especially of a differential birth rate such as now exists. Therefore, an educational crusade seems called for to bring the facts to the attention of intelligent people. But the education of the popular mind would probably be of limited value unless it served to stimulate experiments in easing the economic burdens of parenthood among all classes of superior people.

But while society strives to make parenthood less of a sacrifice among educated and intelligent persons why not attack the problem of the differential birth rate from another front? Why not set about removing the obstacles, in law and custom, which prevent giving to the burdened mothers of the poor the knowledge that would make it possible for them to limit the size of their families? The enormous benefits of such a policy which would accrue to children born to parents in these low-income groups, not alone in material welfare but in parental guidance and training, seem undeniable. Mothers who have only one or two mouths to feed, instead of four to eight, might find it possible to live in decency on their husbands' wages and, not being pushed into industry by economic necessity, might and probably would often prove good homemakers and mothers, especially if they received expert guidance by visiting nurses and in the maternity centers and child clinics now happily being instituted.

But, it may be argued, the working classes want large families; they would not limit the number of their offspring if they could. This statement is almost wholly speculative, with a very frail underpinning of facts. Because working men and women have numerous children, it is inferred that they always would have, no matter how much enlightened information they received. Such is not the case in France, where the birth rate tends to be low *in all classes*. Moreover, the letters which pour in upon Margaret Sanger and the New York Clinical Research Bureau from mothers of the poor are pathetic, sometimes tragic evidence of the desire of these women for the knowledge which will set them free from being "breeding machines," and will enable them to rear a few children in decent comfort.

In view of these well-attested facts, would it not seem the part of wisdom to secure to poor families the deliverance many of them crave?

But, some one may say, will this policy not eventuate in a stationary population? Suppose it does. What, after all, are the conspicuous advantages of an ever-growing populace? Probably the real cause of the opposition of most governments to birth control is the ever-present fear that some other nation, which prohibits the dissemination of contraceptive knowledge, will have a substantial advantage in numbers in time of war. Should all enlightened countries agree to remove obstacles to the spread of regulated scientific information regarding birth control, this bogy would vanish into thin air.

THE OPPOSITION TO BIRTH CONTROL

In every country where the issue of birth control has been raised, there are many well-meaning and intelligent people who are sternly opposed on moral, religious, and patriotic grounds to the spread of this knowledge. Needless to say their arguments deserve open-minded consideration.

The Objections from the Side of Religion.

Orthodox religious believers, especially in the Roman Catholic communion, hold the view that refusal of parenthood, or any effort to curb natural fertility, thwarts the purpose of God in the marriage relation. The position of the Roman Catholic Church on this question was clearly set forth by Pope Pius XI in an encyclical letter issued to Cardinals, Archbishops, Bishops, and priests on January 8, 1931. In this famous pronouncement the Pope solemnly declares:

"Any use whatsoever of matrimony exercised in such a way that the act is deliberately frustrated in its natural power to generate life is an offence against the law of God and of nature, and those who indulge in such are branded with the guilt of a great sin." A concession, however, is made to "virtuous continence (which Christian law permits in matrimony when both parties consent) . . . ," but the ban of the Church falls on any artificial method of controlling nature to prevent the conception of offspring. Recognizing that parents in extreme want have great difficulty in rearing their children, Pope Pius warns them that "they should take care lest the calamitous state of their external affairs should be the occasion of a much more calamitous error." Turning to the question of the serious injury to the mother's health involved in giving birth to more children, a situation that often leads to abortion, the Pope declares that "however much we may pity the mother whose health and even life is gravely imperilled in the performance of the duty allotted to her by nature, nevertheless what could ever be a sufficient reason for excusing in any way the direct murder of the innocent?"[39]

In a solemn pronouncement from the pulpit delivered in New York in December, 1935, Cardinal Hayes also denounced artificial methods of birth control as contrary to the commandment of the Deity and the order of nature. He further attacked the practice on the grounds that birth control leads to race suicide and moral decadence. The evidence in support of the latter charge would, in the judgment of the author, be difficult to secure. Can it be urged that the quality of moral life is higher in Spain and Italy, where birth control is outlawed, than in Holland, and England, where it is practised? Moreover, as a group of outstanding Protestant clergymen and Jewish rabbis have pointed out in a cogent reply to Cardinal Hayes,[40] "social studies that have been made of families in which birth control is an acknowledged procedure do not reveal a lower standard of morality than is found in families that do not limit the number of children. The very opposite is the case. In the larger family there is a higher rate of neglect and desertion, of waywardness and delinquency than in the small family."[41]

Cardinal Hayes believes that the question of family limitation should be attacked from the economic side—and on this point all right-thinking people will agree with him. He indicts our present social order as unjust and urges that it be so reorganized as to bring about a more equitable distribution of income and opportunity. To this ideal every liberal and intelligent man and woman can give whole-hearted allegiance. But the complete reorganization of our economic and social system promises to be a long and arduous task attended by multiple difficulties. Can this task be furthered by unlimited births in families of the low-income group, now struggling to hold the home together and feed all the hungry mouths? Moreover, technological improvements are lessening the demand for laborers. As the Protestant clergymen referred to above do not fail to point out, "the pressure of the working population upon the job supply is a fact that no social scientist can disregard and that makes unemployment one of the major causes of social distress. There is surely no social wisdom in bringing 150 potential workers into the world when there are only 100 jobs to fill. To encourage uncontrolled reproduction is to invite social disaster." [42]

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[39] New York *Times*, January 9, 1931.
[40] *Ibid.*, December 16, 1935.
[41] *Ibid.*

Let us consider briefly the charge of certain religious groups that the use of devices for restricting births is "unnatural" and therefore sinful. It cannot be denied that contraception hinders the regular course of nature and in that sense is unnatural. But, as John Stuart Mill once said, the whole history of civilized life is an attempt to redirect and control nature. The progress of medical art and science reveal one long struggle to defeat nature's ways, and the same may be said of surgical operations. Our artificial lives in heated houses are thoroughly unnatural, as are all our efforts to harness the physical and chemical energies of nature so that they may serve human ends. This argument seems unworthy of more detailed and serious consideration.

But what of a second point often made that artificial restriction of births removes all motives for self-control in sexual relations within marriage and results in demoralizing sexual license. If this charge were well sustained, it would be a serious argument against the practice of contraception. But is it? In the first place has "the fear of consequences," in other words the dread of procreating unwanted offspring, hitherto prevented gross sexual license within marriage? The history of the marital relation, ancient and modern, reveals huge families, overburdened mothers, and undesired children born every year into homes unable to provide for them. Family history must be regarded as furnishing emphatic denial of the theory of the disciplinary effect of "fear of consequences." Could the wives of the past but speak with entire frankness, what tales would they not tell of forced marital relations at any and all times! Not self-control, but license seems to have been the rule in marriage—a reproductive license not only sanctioned, but on the whole encouraged by the church, on the theory that a married pair are under obligation to "be fruitful and multiply." In a memorandum prepared by a Committee of Bishops of the Church of England, women are urged not to "shrink from the heavy burdens which marriage may entail upon them"; and a distinguished churchman has gone on record to the effect that the "performance of the marital act *at any time* should be at the will of the woman as well as of the man." [43]

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[42] New York *Times,* December 16, 1935.

But the religious opponents of birth control, while forced to admit that large families have been the rule in the past and are still almost universal among the ignorant and improvident, urge that a fine chivalry toward women has been for centuries developing in men, a consideration for their wishes in the matter of childbearing which will be completely destroyed if devices for preventing conception come into general use. Instead of chivalrous self-control on the part of husbands, there will ensue a "purely animal relation" between the married pair which will tend to lower them to the level of the brutes. In answer it may be said that, while chivalrous conduct of men toward their wives with respect to what is very revealingly called their "marital rights" no doubt exists among a small minority of men, especially in the class that has enjoyed the influences of a refined home environment, it has never been present in the mass of men. Nevertheless, regard for the personality of women *is* gradually increasing among educated men; and hand in hand with this will go respect for women's inalienable personal rights, of which the right to choice of motherhood is one of the most fundamental. On this question, age-old tradition concerning the man's "rights" in marriage is in conflict with modern ideas of individual freedom. But this does not constitute an argument against contraception. Under a régime of birth control, "chivalry" will still be a necessary attribute of both husband and wife. Both should be taught to have regard for each other's moods and desires, and self-control enough not to force marital intercourse upon an indifferent or reluctant partner. The theory that the use of methods to prevent conception would result in a purely "animal relation" of husband and wife has its roots in medieval asceticism, which has always been blinded to the essential spiritual beauty of the physical expression of love on the part of mates who truly love each other. Sexual intercourse *may* be a beautiful thing, whether or no children are desired as its outcome. That in many instances it is gross and unlovely testifies to the failure of society to hold the physical aspect of marriage in high regard and to appreciate the importance of educating youth in an understanding of its finer spiritual possibilities. Perhaps some day we shall be intelligent enough to provide for our young men and women as careful preparation for marriage and parenthood as we now furnish for business and war.

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[43] See Meyer, "Social and Religious Aspects," in Marchant (Editor), *The Control of Parenthood* (G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York and London, 1920), pp. 143, 146–147. Italics mine.

Objections from the Side of Patriotism.

As populations increase in every nation, numbers tend to outstrip production. Then inevitably comes the time when governments become actively concerned in securing fresh territories blest with virgin natural resources. In defense of aggressive policies toward weak and undeveloped states, they advance plausible-seeming arguments to the effect that they must have more land and access to raw materials to feed their superfluous millions, to increase production, and to stave off unemployment. The economic cause of war is not the sole one, but it is the most important. Prior to the World War, the principal nations of Europe were engaged in a desperate competitive struggle to secure new lands to make homes for their people, new sources of raw materials, new markets for their goods. Within thirty years after Belgium's seizure of the Congo region about 1880, Africa had been largely carved up among Great Britain, France, Germany, and Belgium. The fundamental cause of the cataclysm of 1914–1918 was the bitter economic rivalry of these nations, each of which feared to fall behind in the race for territory and resources. Cox quotes a German writer as stating in 1901: "Because the German people nowadays increase at the rate of 800,000 inhabitants a year, they need both room and nourishment for the surplus. . . . As a world power in the world market we must assert our place and make it secure in order that the younger hands may find room and opportunity for employment." [44] Almost word for word these arguments are used to-day by Mussolini to justify an aggressive war against Ethiopia on the part of an overcrowded Italy.

The intimate relation between population pressure and ambitious policies provocative of war seems obvious enough. Sometimes the struggle centers around securing raw materials, sometimes around the crucial problem of obtaining access to thinly populated regions which would serve as colonies for a too numerous people. Thus we find Japan, with an island area of 261,000 square miles, inhabited by about 70,000,000 souls (1936), desperately seeking outlets for her surplus population in China, Inner and Outer Mongolia, and Manchukuo—a puppet state of Japan torn from the side of China. We are all aware of the animosities, dangerous to peace, that have grown out of the warlike acts of Japan during the last five years. And the rape of Ethiopia by Italy furnishes another example of a poor and overpopulated country seeking land and markets by recourse to war.

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[44] Cox, *op. cit.*, p. 80. Quoted from *Conquest and Kultur*, p. 47. By permission of G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York and London, 1923.

It would seem as if every man and woman with a modicum of knowledge of history would clearly perceive the connection between overpopulation and war, and would eagerly seek ways and means of restricting the growth of peoples within the limits of territorial space and productive capacity. But such, unfortunately, is not the case. The second National Birth-Rate Commission, which presented its report to the British people in 1920, asks with anxiety:

> In the event of a war similar to that which we have just experienced, what would happen to us with a greatly reduced birth-rate? Surely all we have would be taken, and we must become slaves.

Commenting on this statement, Cox declares: "This can only mean that English people are to breed children as a protection against the danger of war. . . . But if that advice is good for the people of England, it is equally good for the peoples of other countries, and the more fully the advice is followed the more frequent must be the racial struggles for room to live." [45]

The essential truth of this statement seems only too obvious and compelling. Yet governments approach the whole question from the point of view that wars are inevitable, since human nature is as it is. Therefore the people must be reminded from time to time of their patriotic duty to breed children for national defense in future wars, as well as for national power and prestige in piping times of peace. It is a striking fact in this connection that France, which has hitherto adopted a matter-of-fact attitude toward birth control, recognizing it as a means of keeping the French population within the national means of subsistence, has been deeply concerned about her low birth rate since the close of the World War. Actuated by fear and suspicion of Germany, the French legislature has enacted drastic laws against the spread of birth control knowledge.

Thus the mad race for armaments may easily be paralleled by an

[45] Cox, *op. cit.*, p. 94. By permission.

equally mad race to excel in man-power—and all to the end that countries may be in a position to engage in a warfare which modern scientific knowledge will make so immeasurably destructive that such a conflict may well result in the suicide of the human race. Instead of challenging each other to a competition in birth rates, would it not be the part of wisdom for the civilized nations of the world to agree that a moral obligation rests upon each of them to restrict its numbers within the limits of its territory and its capacity to feed and employ its people, thus avoiding the chief causes of conflict with its neighbors?

"What is wanted," declares Cox, "is a League of Low Birth-Rate Nations, prepared to take joint action, if necessary, against any race that by its too great fecundity is threatening the peace of the world." [46]

There is another, and more personal, aspect of this question of birth control and patriotic duty that merits consideration. Upon woman, the bearer of the generations, will increasingly fall the responsibility for opposing the cutthroat competition of nations that leads to war, first, by striving to establish reasonable methods of settling menacing national controversies, and, second, by refusing to be deceived by the arguments of militaristic governments into the belief that it is a high act of patriotism to bear children for the purposes of war. When woman was a chattel, she was unable to refuse to bring children into the world to fight her lord's battles; now that she is a free person, she must not be cajoled into accepting the ancient theory that her lot is to be the mother of warriors. Margaret Sanger has vigorously expressed this thought:

> Upon woman the burden and the horrors of war are heaviest. . . . Hers is the crushing weight and the sickening of soul. And it is out of her womb that those things proceed. When she sees what lies behind the glory and the horror, the boasting and the burden, and gets the vision, the human perspective, she will end war. . . . For she will refuse longer to produce the human food upon which the monster feeds.[47]

The Moral Issues Involved.

Some thoughtful men and women are opposed to birth control for moral reasons. Certain of these have been touched upon in the discussion of the views of the theological group. But there are a few points raised by the moralists that merit special consideration. In the first place they seriously object to the use of artificial devices for preventing conception on the grounds (1) that there will result a deplorable increase in sexual immorality outside of marriage; (2) "that there is a good deal of selfishness behind the empty cradle and the celibate club"; (3) that there is danger of mechanization of the intimate love that finds expression in marital intercourse to the point where men and women tend to adopt what Professor Thomson calls "a mere natural history view of marriage and children"; (4) that if, for good reasons, no more children should be born into a family, continence in marriage should be practised rather than artificial restriction of births.

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[46] Cox, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

[47] Sanger, *Woman and the New Race*, pp. 165–166. By permission of Brentano's Inc., New York, 1920.

Let us briefly examine each of these points. First, there is the charge that legalizing the free dissemination, in public clinics, by competent doctors and nurses, of information concerning the prevention of conception would greatly increase sexual immorality. In answer it may be frankly admitted at the outset that there is no guaranty that irregular sexual unions would not be more numerous under a régime of publicly sanctioned birth control. Indeed, during the decade following the World War, when youth was disillusioned and all inhibitions seemed thrown off, there can be little doubt that sexual laxity was more or less prevalent and was aided by the knowledge of contraception which was the common possession of the middle and "upper" classes. Judge Lindsey's testimony concerning indiscriminate sex experience among high-school youths furnishes evidence to this effect.[48] But the reaction against this feverish demand for sexual freedom seems to have set in several years ago, even though women will probably not accept in its entirety the old rigid and discriminatory sex ethic. Convincing evidence of this reaction is not easy to secure. It is variously made up of the statements of a large majority of college students of their desire for marriage, homes, and children; of the fact that serious periodicals like the *Nation* and the *New Republic* no longer devote space to the question of woman's revolt against an unjust sex ethic; of the change in fiction (with the exception of the school of Cabell and Wolfe), from marked stress on sex freedom to realistic picturing of the daily lives and struggles of the plain people, from the coast of Maine to the deep South. In our present stage of civilization it is highly improbable that crude sex experience can prove permanently satisfying to young women and men who long for love, family life, and children. Even the fullest knowledge of methods of birth control, disseminated among all the people, would probably not result in a prolonged period of sexual license. Young people of fine tastes and even a modicum of idealism soon learn that more or less indiscriminate sex experience does not nourish deep-seated emotions and cravings and may even exhaust the springs of life.

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[48] Lindsey, Benjamin B., *Revolt of Modern Youth* (Boni and Liveright, New York, 1925).

Then, too, it should not be overlooked by persons who object to birth control on the ground that it leads to illicit sexual experience that an enormous amount of sex irregularity has always existed in society, in ages when contraceptive methods were largely unknown. The dread of bringing undesired children into the world has not prevented prostitution, or seduction, or voluntary illicit intercourse among young people, from time immemorial. As Cox suggests,[49] if young men and women knew that they could prevent the birth of a child until they were prepared to rear it properly, more of them would marry at an early age, and to this extent sexual irregularities would be reduced. Evidence of the truth of this statement is known to all adults who are closely associated with youth. Many marriages are consummated to-day with a definite understanding that parenthood will be deferred, unions which would never have taken place had knowledge of contraceptive methods been unknown.

But if it could be demonstrated that irregular sexual unions would increase with knowledge of contraceptive methods, yet, even then, it is by no means certain that the imparting of such knowledge should be condemned. The opposition takes its stand on the theory that the fear of producing illegitimate children, socially stigmatized from their birth, acts as an important check on sexual intercourse outside marriage. There is very little in the records to support this view. In the United States, where even now federal and State statutes prohibit the giving of information about birth control and the sale of contraceptive devices, the number of illegitimate births in 1932 was 74,505, or 38.7 per thousand births. It should be added that these rates are materially increased by the inclusion of the illegitimacy figures for Negroes, which are very high. Yet, among the white population in 1932, there were 34,694 illegitimate children born, a rate of 20.7 per thousand white births.[50]

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[49] Cox, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

[50] "Birth, Stillbirth and Infant Mortality Statistics for the Birth Registration Area of the United States," Bureau of the Census, 1932, p. 12.

The cruel treatment meted out in Christian countries to the innocent child born out of marriage appears to have accomplished little in preventing illicit sexual intercourse in the past. But if the dissemination of knowledge of methods of birth restriction were legalized, it is probable that the number of illegitimate births would decrease, not, of course, because of a decrease in sexual irregularity, but because the means of preventing the birth of babies doomed to lives of shame would be generally known and used. Cox gives figures from the Report of the Registrar General of Great Britain for 1919 showing that the rate of illegitimate births had fallen from sixty-one per thousand in the decade 1861–1870, when birth restriction was not practised, to forty per thousand in 1901–1910. Not only the rate but the volume of illegitimacy fell from an average of 45,700 births in the earlier period to an average of 37,000 in the more recent. This represents a decrease of more than 8,000 illegitimate births yearly.[51] Commenting on these figures Cox says:

> In itself this is a most powerful argument for the still wider dissemination of the knowledge of methods of birth control. For illegitimacy involves a cruel wrong to the child and a distinct injury to the nation. Fair play to the child requires that it should be a unit in a recognized family. . . . But the illegitimate child is often deprived not only of the father's influence but also of the mother's care. For the unmarried mother without means to maintain the child dumps it in a workhouse ward, or in some other institution for the care of parentless children. How gravely the illegitimate child suffers in the earliest months of its life is seen by comparing the rates of infant mortality for legitimate and illegitimate children. In London, in the year 1919, the number of legitimate infants who died under 12 months was (omitting decimals) 77 out of every thousand born; the corresponding figure for illegitimate infants was 233.[52]
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> In the face of all these facts surely it is inhuman to attempt to use illegitimacy as a weapon against unchastity. It means that tens of thousands of children, who by the nature of the case must themselves be innocent of any offense, are called upon to suffer for the sins of their parents. That may be ecclesiastical law, but it is directly contrary to the spirit of English law which declares that it is better that the guilty should escape than that the innocent should be punished. It is a far less evil that a hundred women should indulge

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[51] In the United States, on the contrary, illegitimacy rates have been rising for the last ten years. It is possible that the increase in numbers of illegitimate births may be partly explained by the growth in population.

[52] Cox, *op. cit.*, pp. 165–166. Reference here to *Registrar General's Report*, 1919.

in irregular intercourse free from the fear of conception than that one illegitimate child should be born.[53]

Some of the readers of the last statement will disagree with it in greater or less degree. But in fairness, we should ask ourselves which is the better weapon with which to fight sexual laxity—the fear of consequences, which has so conspicuously failed of satisfactory results, or the method of sound sex enlightenment and training from infancy, a method the race has hardly begun to try out because of an ancient taboo? Character building, grounded on knowledge, is a slow means of social improvement, but it is the only certain one.

The second objection of the moralists is to the effect that unrestricted knowledge of birth control will have the effect of encouraging selfish motives in parents and result in many childless homes. There will, no doubt, be fathers and mothers who refuse from selfish motives to procreate children. In ancient society parents of this type exposed helpless infants they did not wish to rear, or resorted to abortions. But shall information of such signal advantage to scores of millions of laborers and professional workers be withheld because a proportion of men and women are motivated chiefly by a narrow self-interest? It is pertinent to ask whether such persons would be desirable parents in any case. Furthermore, it should be kept in mind that the true motives actuating parents to have few children or none at all are not matters of public knowledge, and it is only too easy to assume that these considerations are selfish, when they may be both wise and altruistic.

The third objection against dissemination of knowledge of contraceptive methods is based upon the fear that the sexual relation would be so mechanized that husband and wife might develop a purely materialistic attitude toward what should be a beautiful experience. It is possible that there may be some truth in this objection. Yet it seems to the writer highly improbable that men and women of sensitive refinement, who deeply love each other, will gradually be transformed into crass materialists because they employ devices to prevent conception. As for the many in whose eyes sexual intercourse is *merely* a physical experience, mechanical devices might serve to make them more materialistic; but it does not seem probable. Not the presence or absence of artificial contrivances renders husbands and wives capable or incapable of the highest form of marital union, but the inner selves they bring to this intimate act of love.

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[53] *Ibid.*, pp. 165–166. By permission of G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York and London, 1923.

This leads us to the final objection of the opponents of birth control on moral grounds. A very considerable number of theologians and church people are willing to admit that, in certain instances, parents of limited means or defective mental or physical health should not have large families. But this group stigmatizes the use of devices for restricting births as "unnatural" and therefore profoundly immoral. They urge instead that husband and wife observe a temporary or even permanent continence within marriage as the only moral means of preventing conception. This proposal has met with adverse criticism from physicians of high standing on the ground that the complete suppression of the sex instinct, while living in the intimacy of the marriage relation, may be, and not infrequently is, harmful in its effects upon health of mind and body. This is not to say that self-control is not a good thing, both within and without marriage. But the total repression of the sex urge over many years or a lifetime *may* bring about grave nervous disorders. Margaret Sanger quotes Dr. J. Rutgers, founder of birth control clinics in Holland, in his *Rassenverbesserung* as follows:

"Physiology teaches that every function gains in power and efficiency through a certain degree of control, but that the too extended suppression of a desire gives rise to pathological disturbances and in time cripples the function. Especially in the case of women may the damage entailed in continued sexual abstinence bring about deep disturbances." [54]

Again, Dr. William A. Pusey writes:

> . . . those who, like physicians, get a view of the concealed part of the motives and activities of life must realize the supreme importance to the happiness of mankind of a proper sexual life. It is society's business to see that this is attained by providing proper conditions of married life. Civilization is built upon the family, and satisfactory civilization can be built only upon satisfactory family life. I do not mean to intimate that happiness in family life is dependent altogether upon sexual gratification . . . but I am willing to say bluntly that sexual life is the elemental fact upon which satisfactory family life, as a rule, depends and that without sexual life, marital life, as a rule, is irreparably damaged. . . . In the lack of knowledge of . . . proper methods of birth control . . . in the uncertainties of the situation,

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[54] Sanger, *op. cit.,* p. 104. By permission of Brentano's, New York.

penalties are put upon what should be the pleasure of proper sexual life in marriage that are so great that they often utterly destroy it.[55]

Abortion.

While the moral aspects of birth control are being discussed, it is necessary to consider briefly one of the most deplorable effects of government refusal to sanction instruction, under proper safeguards, in methods of birth restriction. As a result of this prohibition, women, made reckless by the prospect of bearing other children into already overburdened families, or convinced that they will not be able to survive another childbirth, often resort to the immoral and criminal practice of abortion. In a recent article, Dr. Benjamin T. Tilton sheds a stream of light on the prevalence of this practice:

> It is not generally known outside the medical profession and social workers, how widespread this practice is. It amounts in fact to a national disgrace. I say national because the United States leads all other countries in the number of abortions performed yearly. . . . It is no exaggeration to say that thousands of women die annually from the effects of these illegal operations and other thousands become chronic invalids or permanently sterile. These tragedies are a disgrace to our civilization and cry for prevention. They can be prevented and I believe alone prevented, by the dissemination (through proper channels) of Birth Control knowledge concerning scientific, safe and sure methods of contraception.[56]

The United States, then, has the dishonorable distinction of leading the world in the number of abortions annually performed. It has been estimated, on the basis of physicians', nurses', and hospital records, that over a million abortions occur in this country every year. Not a little evidence was laid before the First Birth-Rate Commission in Great Britain to the effect that in that country also, wives of the poorer laboring classes practice abortion, while the wives of highly paid workers adopt measures to prevent conception.

In the face of such facts as the above, it is difficult to understand how moralists can strain at the gnat of artificial means of family restriction, and swallow the camel of self-induced abortion—a practice not only harmful physically, if not actually fatal to the mother, but one which the law in well-nigh every civilized state declares to be a criminal offense. The only explanation of such a position seems to be that these well-intentioned critics are ignorant of the facts regarding the prevalence of abortion. It may be said that the women who practise this method should be taught the moral evil of their action. But when human beings are brought face to face with a serious situation, and are ignorant of a sane way of meeting it, they will feel justified in resorting to desperate measures to escape from the trap in which they are caught.

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[55] "Medicine's Responsibilities in the Birth Control Movement," in *Birth Control Review,* May, 1925, p. 135.

[56] *Birth Control Review,* March, 1925, p. 71.

THE BIRTH CONTROL MOVEMENT

Space prevents any but the briefest consideration of the rise and development of the birth control movement. Voluntary restriction of births seems to have begun in France in the first decade of the nineteenth century. In that period there was a striking fall in the birth rate, from about thirty-nine per thousand in 1774 to thirty-two per thousand in the decade 1801–1810. The death rate correspondingly dropped from thirty-seven to twenty-eight. During the entire century, both the birth rate and the death rate have fallen steadily and proportionately, until at the present time (1934) the French birth rate is about 16.1 per thousand and the death rate 15.1, making a rate of increase of one per thousand. It is a striking fact that the natural rate of increase in France is only one per thousand less than it was in 1774, when the birth rate was thirty-nine and the death rate reached thirty-seven. Despite this fact, however, the French government has been alarmed about the national birth rate ever since the World War. Animated, no doubt, by fear and suspicion of other countries, bred by the War, the government passed an anti-Malthusian law in 1920, absolutely suppressing all practical birth control propaganda and prohibiting the sale of artificial devices for preventing conception.[57]

The first country in Europe to approach the problem of birth restriction in a scientific and broadly social spirit was Holland, where a Neo-Malthusian League was formed in 1881. Four years later the first birth control clinic in the world was opened in Amsterdam by Dr. Aletta Jacobs, who has been an enthusiastic worker in behalf of birth restriction for more than a generation. In 1925, fifty-four clinics with eight doctors and fifty-six nurses in charge, had been established in Holland, for the purpose of giving free scientific information to women concerning contraceptive methods.[58] There is at present great need in Holland of more free clinics to give instruction to the unemployed. The number of unemployed patients visiting the Amsterdam free clinic has increased from 13 per cent in 1932 to 22 per cent in 1934.[59] It is a significant fact that the birth rate in Holland (20.7) is higher than in most of the advanced countries of Europe.

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[57] Hardy, "The Truth about France," in *Birth Control Review,* November, 1925, pp. 309–310.

Other countries where information concerning artificial means of birth restriction is easily available to the masses are Australia and New Zealand. In both these commonwealths, the birth rates have fallen sharply in the last two decades, but so, likewise, have the death rates, which are the lowest in the world. In 1934, the Australian birth rate was 16.4, and the death rate only 9.3; while in New Zealand, the respective rates were 16.5 and 8.5.

In Great Britain, Dr. Marie Stopes and others have done valiant work in recent years in an attempt to break down the prejudice of the British government and people against the dissemination of information concerning birth control. On April 28, 1926, the House of Lords, by a vote of 57 to 44, passed a resolution of Lord Buckmaster, former Lord Chancellor of England, requesting "His Majesty's Government . . . to withdraw all instructions given to, or conditions imposed on Welfare Committees for the purpose of causing such committees to withhold from married women in their district information, when sought by such women, as to the best means of limiting their families." [60] This has recently been enacted. Contraceptive information is now being given in maternity centers maintained by Welfare Committees in Great Britain, under certain restrictions which have recently been liberalized by the Ministry of Health.

In the United States, the work of the advocates of birth control has been seriously hampered by the mistaken efforts of the late Anthony Comstock, founder of the Society for the Suppression of Vice. In 1873, this well-meaning but misguided reformer succeeded in inducing Congress to pass a federal obscenity act, preventing the circulation through the mails of vicious literature and pictures, and to include under the term *obscene* all literature or devices designed to prevent conception.

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[58] Sanger, in *Birth Control Review,* January, 1925, p. 20.

[59] *Birth Control Review,* June, 1935, p. 2.

[60] See *Birth Control Review,* June, 1926, p. 205.

Later acts of Congress made the original law applicable to all common carriers, including express companies, as well as to the mails.

Following the lead of the federal government, many of the States of the Union have enacted laws to the same effect.[61] Therefore no important advance will be made in the direction of establishing birth control clinics in the United States, until these laws are amended or repealed. Two organizations—the American Birth Control League and the National Committee on Federal Legislation for Birth Control—have worked with fine courage and persistence, in the face of hostile public opinion, to secure the amendment of the existing laws in such wise as to legalize instruction in clinics on approved methods of contraception. In this crusade Mrs. Margaret Sanger has been the chief American leader.

During the last five or six years progress has been relatively rapid. State Birth Control Leagues, coöperating with the national association, have been organized in at least twenty-one States in all sections of the Union. In addition 230 recognized birth control centers are now (January, 1936) aiding thousands of mothers throughout the country—the largest number of such centers in proportion to population that exists in any country. During the year 1935 the number of birth control clinics under medical direction increased 50 per cent. Even more encouraging is the fact that the medical profession as a whole is no longer hostile to birth control. In the summer of 1935 the American Medical Association appointed a committee to study the whole problem of control of human fertility. Recognizing that the ignorance of methods of contraception on the part of physicians themselves has been one of the heaviest handicaps of the birth control movement, the faculties of forty-five medical schools are at present teaching their students contraceptive technique.[62]

In Washington Mrs. Sanger and her National Committee have been gallantly fighting to bring about amendments by Congress of the federal laws relating to contraception. The proposed amendment of the Tariff Act of 1930, which excludes supplies and medical literature relating to birth control from the United States, would permit importation of appliances and literature by bona fide dealers in medical supplies or by licensed physicians, hospitals, or clinics. Similarly the sections of the Criminal Code prohibiting transportation of literature and supplies by United States mails or common carriers would be amended by excluding medical schools and journals, hospitals, licensed clinics, and physicians from the provisions of the act. The amendments have been twice favorably reported by the Senate Judiciary Committee and once actually affirmatively voted on by the Senate, only to be reconsidered and tabled through the efforts of a Catholic member. Undoubtedly, however, these amendments will ultimately be passed, not only because they are in harmony with popular sentiment in general but because the disclosures regarding high birth rates among persons on relief have given powerful stimulus to the movement for amendment of the laws both within and oustide of Congress.

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[61] See the digest of State laws by Worthington, in the *Journal of Social Hygiene,* Vol. IX, November, 1923, p. 458. A later digest was prepared in 1928 by the Committee on Federal Legislation for Birth Control but it is out of print.

[62] See Eric Matsner, M. D., *Birth Control Review,* November, 1935, pp. 1–3.

Encouraging, likewise, is the changed attitude of Protestant and Jewish religionists toward the question of birth control. In March, 1931, "guarded" approval was given to birth control by the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, an organization including most of the influential Protestant sects in the country. Birth control has also been endorsed by the Universalist General Convention which has passed resolutions recommending the repeal of laws interfering with the prescription of contraception and the establishment of licensed birth control clinics. Progressive Hebrew rabbis are likewise active in the promotion of birth control.

On the other hand, as we have seen, the Roman Catholic Church is hostile to the birth control movement and has stimulated active opposition to it in and out of Congress. Yet Catholic authorities have been compelled to respond to the pressure of public opinion to the extent of sanctioning a method of birth restriction which does not employ mechanical means. In recent years two books have been published with the approval of the Roman Church which set forth the theory that there is a "sterile period" in the monthly cycle of the wife when marital intercourse may safely be indulged in without fear of conception. The first of these works, *The Rhythm,* was published in 1932 with the statement on its title page "Published with Ecclesiastical Approbation." The second book entitled *The Sterile Period of Family Life* appeared a year later with the Imprimatur of Patrick, Cardinal Hayes. Such sanction given to books setting forth a method of birth control seems a large concession to popular sentiment on the part of the Catholic authorities.

Not only does the Church recognize the need of mothers for relief from child-bearing, but it approves the use of the mails for sending literature to good Catholics showing how this desirable end may be attained. Therefore it may correctly be said that the Roman Catholic Church differs in its views from the advocates of birth control chiefly on the question of *method*. Mechanical means of preventing conception are against nature and in the judgment of the Church profoundly immoral; restriction of marital relations to a monthly sterile period is moral and approved. It should be added that physicians have found that the so-called "sterile period" is grossly unreliable and will probably prove disappointing to many who put their trust in it.

In conclusion, it may be said that the birth control movement, which was viewed by the vast majority of people with hostility and contempt only twenty-five years ago has, in recent years received the powerful support of public opinion, of many religious sects, of a growing body of physicians and social workers and of well-nigh all eugenists and students of population problems. It cannot be doubted that within a few years its courageous advocates will have accomplished most of their humane objectives. The goal is in sight.

TOPICS FOR REPORTS

1. College Education and the Birth Rate.
   - Willystine Goodsell, "The Size of Family of College and Non-College Women," *American Journal of Sociology,* March, 1936.
   - S. J. Holmes, "The Size of College Families," *Journal of Heredity,* XV, October, 1924, 407–415.
   - Howard J. Banker, "Education and Fecundity," *Journal of Heredity,* XVI, February, 1925, 57–59.
2. Economic and Ethical Aspects of Birth Control.
   - Harold Cox, *The Problem of Population* (G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York and London, 1923), Chs. II, VI.
3. Effects of the Falling Birth Rate upon Children.
   - Warren S. Thompson, "Recent Changes in the Birth Rate and their Significance for Child Welfare," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* Vol. 151, September, 1930, pp. 25–31.
4. Increasing the Marriage Rate and Birth Rate of the Superior.
   - Paul Popenoe and R. H. Johnson, *Applied Eugenics* (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1923), Chs. XII, XIII.

ADDITIONAL SELECTED READINGS

1. Marie Kopp, *Birth Control in Practice* (Robert M. McBride and Company, New York, 1934), passim.
2. Norman E. Himes, "Birth Control in Historical and Clinical Perspective," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* Vol. 160, March, 1932, pp. 49–65.
3. Adolph Meyer, M.D. (editor) *Birth Control, Facts and Responsibilities* (The Williams and Wilkins Company, Baltimore, 1925), entire book.
4. Paul Popenoe, *Conservation of the Family* (The Williams and Wilkins Company, Baltimore, 1926), pp. 125–153.
5. E. R. Groves and W. F. Ogburn, *American Marriage and Family Relationships* (Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1928), Ch. XVI.
6. *Birth Control Review,* Issues 1925–1930, passim.

CHAPTER XV

EUGENICS AND PARENTHOOD

EUGENICS has been defined as the subject that deals with the science and practice of improving the hereditary characteristics in mankind—those characters that are transmitted from forbears to descendants. Very early in social history men observed that offspring not rarely showed physical and mental traits similar to those of their parents. Four hundred years before Christ Plato sought to use this natural process as a means of improving the quality of man. In the fifth book of the Republic he outlined a scheme for mating the "superior" with the superior and the "inferior" with the inferior, at the same time exposing all defective offspring—a scheme which he believed would result in greatly increasing the value and social usefulness of the citizens of his ideal republic. This eugenic plan—the first of importance in culture history—would have destroyed the family by making sex unions merely temporary and by separating infants shortly after birth from their parents to be reared in public nurseries by women carefully trained in the nurture of the young and in the ideals of the Republic. It need hardly be said that the Greek people never put Plato's ideal eugenic scheme into operation, save for an abortive attempt in the city of Syracuse in Sicily.

The modern eugenic movement springs from two sources—the enormous accumulations of culture which must be passed on to every new generation and which demand superior mental endowment to carry forward, and the discoveries of science concerning the method of transmission of hereditary characters. The founder of contemporary eugenics was the Englishman Francis Galton (1822–1911) who, in his great work *Hereditary Genius,* attempted to show that superior mental ability runs in families. Galton's genealogical studies led him to the conclusion that talent and degenerate traits are inherited through a long family line. In a later work, *Natural Inheritance,* he embodied the results of the measurement of certain physical characteristics of individuals and of their relatives in the direct and collateral lines. Tables of correlation with respect to these physical traits were set up between groups of kindred, such as fathers and children, brothers and brothers, which showed that the correlations were positive and of considerable magnitude. For example, more or less close resemblances of fathers and sons in height, weight, color of eyes and hair, together with certain physical peculiarities were discovered.

Galton's work, later carried on by Karl Pearson, led to the founding of the Galton Laboratory of Eugenics in connection with the University of London, and subsequently to the organization of the Eugenics Education Society in 1908. This society publishes a journal called the *Eugenics Review*. The English eugenics movement had a marked influence in the United States. Dr. Charles B. Davenport, the acknowledged leader in American eugenics, was the founder in 1916 of the Eugenics Record Office at Cold Spring Harbor, Long Island, an organization connected with the Carnegie Institution in Washington. This office has done valuable pioneer work in collecting and storing family histories and engaging in research in problems of heredity. Connected with it is the Eugenics Research Association which publishes the *Eugenical News*. In 1926 the American Eugenics Society was organized, with the purpose of applying the findings of eugenic research in such ways as to promote human betterment. Among other eugenic associations in America are the Human Betterment Foundation and the Institute of Family Relations in California, the Eugenics Education Society of Chicago, and the Galton Society of New York.

England and the United States are not alone in an interest in eugenics, especially in its application to problems of human improvement. Strong eugenic movements are under way in Germany, Sweden, Italy, France, and even in the Soviet Union. An International Federation of Eugenic Organizations has been formed, which has held three international congresses, one in New York in 1932.

THE FUNDAMENTAL POSITIONS OF EUGENICS

One of the basic doctrines of convinced eugenists is the theory that certain types of persons are socially more useful and desirable than other types and make much better parents. They believe that, by processes of selection yet to be worked out, such desirable characteristics as health, energy, intelligence, efficiency, social-mindedness, a sense of responsibility, initiative, and adaptability to persons and circumstances can be bred for, since these important traits are in large degree determined by heredity. Needless to say this theory, if true and if put into effect, would result in a marked improvement in the quality of family life, as well as a betterment of individual human nature. Such characteristics as those listed, with others also desirable, such as capacities for love, sympathy, and tenderness, if part of the make-up of most men and women could hardly fail to have their effects in more enduring and happy marriages and in the greatly improved nurture of the young. Therefore eugenists urge that the proportion of individuals of superior types be increased, so far as possible, in every community. This is the aim of positive eugenics.

A second theory of eugenics is the corollary of the first. In every society are undesirable types, revealing not only such grave defects as feeble-mindedness, insanity, deformities, criminality, innate tendencies to certain diseases, but less serious defects such as laziness, mental dullness, physical weakness, lack of self-control and a sense of responsibility, and inefficiency. The eugenist proposes to lessen the number of these inferior individuals by decreasing the rate at which they propagate. By scientific birth control and by sterilization of the most socially dangerous types, he believes that the hereditary traits of mankind can be steadily raised and the quality of society immensely improved. This is the negative aspect of eugenics.

Another principle of eugenics, held by a vocal group, is that "like produces like," that children are similar to their parents. As demonstrated later, this statement is not strictly correct in the light of the science of genetics, and it is responsible for a considerable volume of criticism leveled at all eugenists whether they hold the doctrine without reservations or not.[1] On this theory eugenists divide into two groups: the first, superficially informed regarding the findings of genetics since Mendel, gives unreserved allegiance to the theory that "like breeds like"; a second group—and this probably includes the majority of present-day eugenists—is thoroughly conversant with the discoveries of genetics regarding the transmission of hereditary characters and is far from holding the doctrine in unmodified form. The latter body of eugenists understands very well that each child differs from his parents in hereditary characteristics to a greater or less degree; that parents of a given type may produce offspring of markedly different types. Yet these eugenists know, also, that if a large number of parents is selected—say a thousand—their children will, on the average, resemble the parental type more nearly than will the offspring of a thousand unselected parents. Therefore, by selecting *on a large scale* parents having certain characteristics regarded as desirable, by encouraging them to have more children, and by decreasing the birth rate among inferior types, a gradual approximation to the selected parental types may be attained in future generations. To this modified and cautious statement of the theory that offspring are similar to their parents in hereditary characters geneticists give support.

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[1] See Raymond Pearl, *The Present Status of Eugenics* (The Sociological Press, 1928), pp. 9–20.

Because of the relatively large birth rate among the "unsuccessful," meaning those who do not "get ahead" in financial and social status in our existing system of society, most eugenists lament the fact that our population is being "recruited at the bottom." "Success," as it is defined to-day quite largely in material terms, is believed to be positively correlated with inborn ability to a very high degree. Men and women "get on in life" because of the possession of valued characteristics inherited from their ancestors and they are social failures largely because they lack these hereditary qualities. Since these "failures" have, on the whole, the most numerous offspring, many eugenists believe that a progressive degeneration of the human race will be the outcome of such differential fertility unless vigorous efforts are made to assist superior parents to have much larger families.

Finally, it can hardly be doubted that some—not all—eugenists cherish too sanguine expectations with regard to the reforms that applied eugenics may bring about. There have been—and are—eugenists who predict that, if certain eugenic procedures like sterilization were put into operation, there would be a speedy elimination of the worst forms of crime, of rape and seduction, of insanity and idiocy. Thus certain of the most baffling problems of society would be solved. Commenting on these confident predictions Professor Jennings says: "Such hopes of immediate results are based on an inadequate conception of the methods of hereditary transmission and of the rôle of environmental influence in human life." [2] Biological processes are slow and their results are far from immediate. Generations are required to bring about measureable and uniform changes in the hereditary make-up of human beings.

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[2] H. S. Jennings, "Eugenics," *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences,* Vol. V, 1931, p. 620.

CRITICISMS OF EUGENIC THEORIES

As already suggested, geneticists and others have not been slow in leveling criticisms at the fundamental theories of applied eugenics. With regard to the position that types of persons, having certain "superior" characteristics, are socially more useful and desirable than others lacking in them, these critics point out that eugenists differ among themselves as to what traits *are* most desirable, but disagree much more vigorously on *what individuals belong in the socially superior groups.* On this point sharp divergencies of opinion appear and lead at times to heated controversy and dissension. There are those who believe that the traits of industry, a sense of responsibility and neighborly helpfulness, qualities often found among humble working people, are as valuable social assets as intellectual ability and ambition, rated high by most eugenists. Commenting on this controversial question, Raymond Pearl is reminded of the correspondence between Galton and Darwin in 1872–1873. Galton had formed a plan for a Eugenic Register, in which superior people were to be listed, and asked Darwin for his opinion of the scheme. Darwin was "politely indifferent" and wrote: "But the greatest difficulty, I think, would be in deciding who deserved to be on the register. How few are above mediocrity in health, strength, morals and intellect; *and how difficult to judge on these latter heads.*" [3]

With regard to the theory of eugenics that certain highly undesirable types are found in every society—insane, feeble-minded, persistently criminal persons,—and that these individuals should be prevented from propagating, geneticists again are adversely critical. They point out that there exists the utmost complexity and variety of combinations of the genes furnished by each parent, so that it is occasionally possible for feeble-minded parents to have a normal child and for apparently normal parents to bear feeble-minded offspring. "Nature shuffles and parcels out the genes," says Holmes, "and the particular combination which an individual draws out of the parental store is a matter of just sheer luck." [4]

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[3] Pearl, *op. cit.*, p. 9. Italics mine.

[4] S. J. Holmes, *The Eugenic Predicament* (Harcourt, Brace and Company, New York, 1933), p. 60.

Let us consider this question in more detail. Unquestionably serious defects appear in individuals, making them abnormal. Certain of these defects, such as some (not all) cases of feeble-mindedness, certain types of insanity, hæmophilia,[5] Huntington's chorea,[5] and brachydactyly[5] have been proven to have their source in defective genes. They are unquestionably hereditary. Can these defects be permanently wiped out by prevention of propagation? Take the case of congenital feeble-mindedness. Would the method of the eugenists in preventing the feeble-minded from perpetuating themselves eliminate this grave defect in course of time from human society? The geneticists answer no. In those cases where feeble-mindedness is due to a single pair of defective genes, and in particular when the defect is *dominant* in the sense that the persons that carry the defective genes *are themselves defective,* prevention of propagation by the feeble-minded can have beneficial results. But these results are modest when compared with the hopes of eugenists. For the most that could be accomplished by preventing propagation would be to eliminate all *dominant defectives* within a generation. Unfortunately these are a small proportion of the human beings who carry the defective gene of feeble-mindedness.

Fisher's careful calculations[6] lead him to the conclusion that about 11 per cent of the feeble-minded of any generation are the offspring of feeble-minded persons in the previous generation. If this group, representing an estimated 330,000 defectives in a population of 100,000,000, were prevented from having children, feeble-mindedness could be reduced about 11 per cent in a generation—that is, if the genes were widely scattered in the population.[7]

Such a result is certainly worth achieving, although it is far from eliminating feeble-mindedness. Fisher estimates that 89 per cent of feeble-mindedness comes from matings among the "carrier group," carrying one defective gene to the pair. And this body of "carriers" outnumbers the feeble-minded group with two defective genes, thirty to one. When a normal man in the "carrier group" mates with a woman also carrying a defective gene in the same pair, the two may have a feeble-minded child to their intense surprise and distress. In the words of Jennings: "Thus by stopping the propagation of the feeble-minded of the present generation, we get rid of about 11 per cent of the feeble-minded of the next generation. That generation still contains 89 per cent produced by the carriers. If the original number of feeble-minded was 330,000, in the next generation the number is about 293,700." [8] By entirely excluding the feeble-minded from propagating we do not affect much the great "reservoir" of carriers from which springs most of this defect. After the first generation, Jennings holds that "very little progress" is made in reducing the number of the feeble-minded, if the defective genes are widely scattered. In the course of several generations, however, during all of which time the feeble-minded have been prevented from propagating, there *will* be a slight decrease in the number of the normal carriers, due to the fact that they no longer mate with the feeble-minded. But the decrease in feeble-mindedness would be so slight that it has been calculated that sixty-eight generations would be required to reduce the proportion of the feeble-minded in the population from a supposititious one per thousand to one per ten thousand! [9]

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[5] Hæmophilia is a hereditary tendency to spontaneous bleeding. Huntington's chorea is a mental disease marked by irregular muscular movements, gait and speech difficulties and steady mental deterioration, ending in helplessness and death. Brachydactyly refers to abnormally short fingers or toes having only two joints instead of three.

[6] R. A. Fisher, "Elimination of Mental Defect," *Journal of Heredity,* Vol. 18, 1927, pp. 529–531.

[7] On this whole question see H. S. Jennings, *The Biological Basis of Human Nature,* pp. 11–16, 240–247. This should be read with care as it is basic to an understanding of the whole question.

On the other hand, if the defective genes are *not* widely disseminated in the population but are somewhat concentrated, then it is estimated by Fisher that a reduction of 30 to 40 per cent in the number of the feeble-minded might result from stopping propagation by these defectives. This would, indeed, be a fine achievement of incalculable social benefit!

As we have seen, criticisms have also been directed against the position of many eugenists that "like produces like," that children will resemble their parents. The work of Galton in tracing hereditary genius through several generations of gifted families has done much to implant this theory deep in the cherished doctrines of eugenics until recent times.[10] Raymond Pearl has been especially energetic in attacking this view. A few years ago he wrote: "The old war-cry 'like produces like' is responsible for a dreadful lot of unconscious bias in such matters.

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[8] Jennings, *op. cit.,* pp. 241–242.

[9] *Ibid.,* p. 242.

[10] Yet even Galton found that of 100 eminent judges only 9.1 had had fathers of even a moderate degree of eminence.

Nearly everybody feels emotionally that a great man ought to have had personally distinguished or superior parents. So nearly all biographers . . . do their best to show that this was so."[11]

To test this theory Pearl made out a card for every distinguished person to whose biography one or more pages was given in the eleventh edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica.* On each card was a record of the parents of the distinguished individual, showing whether or not a separate article was to be found in the *Encyclopedia* regarding either of the parents, and whether there was any evidence anywhere in the *Encyclopedia* that the parents were superior persons *in their own right.* By the test of space devoted to the biography Pearl selected a total of 1,011 persons of high distinction from the 25,000 or more receiving biographical notices. From this group he selected the philosophers (sixty-three), the poets (eighty-five) and the scientific men (sixty-six). The parents of fifteen of the philosophers were unknown or at least unmentioned. They could, therefore, not have been in any way distinguished. Of the forty-eight remaining pairs of parents, two fathers and one mother had short biographical notices in the *Encyclopedia.* The occupations of the fathers ranged from "high political offices" to fishing and shoemaking. Of the forty-eight fathers at least twenty-one, or 43 per cent, held humble posts such as "petty office holders," shopkeepers, weavers, farmers, or peasants, a soldier, a saddler, a shoemaker, a fisherman. Of two fathers the record reads: "dissipated, violent tempered and foolish," and "illiterate and criminal." If we include the fifteen pairs of parents of the sixty-three philosophers of whom nothing was written, it may be said that forty-four pairs, or 70 per cent of the total, showed no distinction whatever. Even in the case of the other twenty-seven fathers, who were engaged in occupations requiring more education and intelligence than in the case of the twenty-one parents in manual employments, it would be a bit difficult to infer that they were all "superior persons" in the strict sense of the term. Five held higher political offices, one or more were merchants, four were lawyers, four were clergymen of small parishes (not indicative of much distinction), four were college or university professors, three were physicians, two were of titled family, and one was a schoolmaster.

Similarly, Pearl found that the parents of thirteen of the eighty-five poets were not mentioned, therefore they had achieved no measure of distinction. The occupations of the remaining seventy-two fathers showed the same wide range as in the case of the philosophers. By generously including twelve fathers who were titled, three who were "country squires" and six who were "wealthy but otherwise undistinguished," it may be said that about fifty-two, or 72 per cent of the fathers had risen above mediocrity. But if the three foregoing dubious groups be excluded then only thirty-one fathers or 43 per cent of the total had achieved any degree of superiority in their own right. Two of these fathers were themselves poets. The same holds true of the fathers of the sixty-six scientific men. Of fifteen there is no record and of the remaining fifty-one whose occupations are listed, at least twenty, or 39 per cent, were engaged in humble trades or manual employments. Adding to these the fifteen fathers who are unknown or unmentioned, it will be seen that more than half are wholly undistinguished men by the world's standards.

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[11] Pearl, *op. cit.,* p. 12.

Apparently, then, like does not always breed like, and offspring of marked distinction may spring from humble folk. However, the eugenists are by no means wholly in error when they make this claim. Since superior ability does seem to be a hereditary character, geneticists will agree that *in general,* if large numbers of parents are taken into consideration, children do breed more or less true to parental types.

With regard to the theory of eugenics that the "unsuccessful" in our present society are precisely the group that has the largest families, so that the population is being recruited from the bottom, the geneticists also have something to say. They point out that this doctrine takes too little account of the powerful influence of environmental factors. According to Jennings, "most of the qualities on which the social value of individuals depends are deeply affected by diversities of environment." So far, then, as the differences between "superior" and "inferior" people are caused by these differences in nurture and environment, the plan of increasing the size of families among the superior groups and decreasing propagation among the so-called inferior classes will not bring about the eugenic and social benefits desired. For this reason, a vigorous and continuing campaign against the gross inequalities existing in our competitive and exploiting society are strongly indicated. To seek to bring about the improvement of human beings by eugenic measures *only* would seem to be largely wasted effort.

Again, it might be suggested that the standards by which "success" is measured to-day might not be those set up in a wholly different kind of society, as Jennings has pointed out.[12] In course of time coöperation may be rated much more highly than competition, desire for the public good than ambition for personal gain and advancement and neighborly kindness than getting ahead of the other fellow. "Efficiency," god of our present economic system, may come to be reinterpreted as skill and intelligence motivated by concern for the common good, not shrewd, far-seeing plans and ruthless exploitation of workers to increase profits. In such a coöperative society, our present "leaders" might not shine.

In a recent article Rumney says:

> These facts of differential fertility do not, *unless certain unproved assumptions are made,* lead to the conclusion that dysgenic influences are undermining society. The stratification that exists between the social classes seems social rather than biological in character, position in life not being *necessarily* an indication of good biological heredity. The studies that have been made as to the relationship between social class and a number of physical characters, such as head form, cranial capacity, and size of head, brain weight, stature and general physique, are unsatisfactory and inconclusive. In this connection it is interesting to note that in the reports of the English National Service Boards the miners and agriculturists, groups with high fertility, had the best physique in the country. Nor do any convincing studies exist that prove a relationship between mental worth and social grouping. The differences are slight and overlap. The superiority of the children whose fathers are in the better paid occupations is probably due to their superior environment, and to the fact that they mature physically earlier.[13]

HEREDITARY DEFECTS AND THEIR TRANSMISSION

When all allowances are made for the scientific facts of genetics regarding the complexity of the mechanism of heredity, the lack of uniformity in the inheritance of parental characters, and the tremendous importance of environmental factors in determining human development, it yet remains true that there are undesirable elements in our society whose defects are hereditary and who constitute a grave social burden. It is also true that the improvement of human stock is a worthy ideal of eugenics. Differences of opinion between geneticists and scientific eugenists are largely concerned with questions of method and results. That the hereditary traits of human nature should, if possible, be improved; and that the family and society should not suffer more than is necessary from abnormal types who, in some instances, should never have been born and who assuredly should be prevented from propagating, are facts on which both groups are pretty well agreed.

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[12] "Eugenics," *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences,* Vol. V, p. 621.

[13] "The Problem of Differential Fertility," *Population,* Vol. II, No. 1, November, 1935, p. 14. Italics mine.

What are the serious defects which gravely handicap "the legions of the ill-born," in Holmes's phrase? There can be little doubt that certain defects of the eye, such as cataract and cleft iris are hereditary, as are certain types of deafness. Insanity may be either hereditary or acquired, and there is a surprising range in the estimates of alienists concerning the extent to which the defect is inherited. As Holmes points out, the percentages vary all the way from a low of 3 per cent to a high of over 90. There are many forms of mental disease included in the term insanity and only a few, such as manic-depressive insanity, dementia præcox, paranoia, etc., are clearly recognizable types. Huntington's chorea is in a high degree hereditary and is, moreover, a dominant character, that is, the defective gene produces its results even when a normal gene is present in the pair. Manic-depressive insanity is also frequently inherited. Guyer reports the case of a possibly normal father and an insane mother who had nine children—four daughters and five sons. Three daughters and two sons were committed to State hospitals for the insane several times and a third son had one attack of insanity. A girl died in her third year. Only two adults were apparently sane.[14]

Epilepsy was once regarded as almost wholly inherited, but physicians now strongly incline to the belief that the disease is primarily caused by injuries received at childbirth or early in life. However, it has been conceded that perhaps 20 per cent is due to hereditary causes. This is a rough calculation and quite possibly inaccurate. Fortunately epilepsy is rare; it is estimated that much less than one per cent of the population suffers from this disease.

Feeble-mindedness is believed by many to be on the increase in the population, but it may be that the apparent growth in numbers is due to the fact that much more attention is being given to this defect than formerly. Feeble-minded persons are far less often kept inconspicuously in private homes than was once the case. Whether numerically increasing or not, these unfortunate persons bring intense distress to families

[14] Holmes, *The Eugenic Predicament*, pp. 20, 21.

and a heavy burden to the State. Leonard Darwin states that "reliable estimates" show that in Great Britain between four and five individuals in every thousand are feeble-minded. About 350,000 children in England and Wales are "incapable of profiting by ordinary education. . . . These facts are appalling, especially when we call to mind the suffering of parents when discovering that their child is feeble-minded or worse and utterly different from the being so hopefully pictured in advance." [15]

The feeble-minded, of course, may be classified into several grades. Lowest of all are the idiots, whose intelligence never develops beyond that of a child of three and who can perform only the most simple operations. Fortunately, these unhappy individuals constitute the smallest group of mental defectives and are now commonly taken from their homes and placed in institutions. Next in grade are the imbeciles, with the intelligence of children between four and seven. Although this group can be taught to take care of themselves, they cannot earn a living and will always be family dependents or institutional charges. The school medical officer in London reported that in the period 1914–1930 over 13 per cent of the feeble-minded in schools were imbeciles. The next higher and much the largest group is composed of morons who have a mental age of seven to twelve years. With careful training and supervision this group can be made self-supporting and socially useful in the simpler forms of work. Probably over 80 per cent of the feeble-minded are morons. There follow the "dull normal" and border-line cases with intelligence quotients ranging from 70 to 90 or above. This group is not rated as feeble-minded but fills the ranks of the slow and the relatively stupid who perform the manual tasks in the world's work not requiring high intelligence. They may be and often are useful and responsible members of families and citizens of the state.

As in the case of insanity there is great divergence of opinion regarding the question of how much feeble-mindedness is caused by hereditary factors and how much by environment and nurture. There are well-attested cases of feeble-mindedness due to glandular disturbances, to toxic conditions in the mother during pregnancy, to syphilis, and to brain injuries at birth caused by careless use of instruments in delivery. It is astonishing to discover the wide diversity of opinion among experts as to the amount of feeble-mindedness that is due to heredity.

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[15] *What Is Eugenics?* (Galton Publishing Co., Inc., New York, 1929), p. 44.

Holmes cites Dr. Clarkson's statement, made after years of experience in an institution, that, after talking with the parents of 1,000 mental defectives, the number of these fathers and mothers he would certify as themselves defective could be counted on his fingers! On the other hand, a careful study made in Rostock, Germany, of 250 families having defective offspring disclosed that the father showed marked mental defect in 24 per cent of the cases, the mother in 32 per cent and both parents in 11.6 per cent. Thus, in this investigation, 67.6 per cent of the mentally defective children had one or both parents belonging in the mentally defective class.[16] Such sharp divergences of judgment on the part of experts regarding the rôle played by heredity in mental defects, is disturbing to the lay student and should make him pause in accepting any sweeping conclusions about the feeble-minded and the prevention of these unfortunates from propagation.

Much the same divergence of opinion exists with respect to the *mode of transmission* of hereditary feeble-mindedness from parents to child. Many, but not all, geneticists hold that feeble-mindedness is a recessive character. This explains why normal parents who each carry one defective gene may, if these genes combine to form a pair, have a feeble-minded child. Again, if a normal person, carrying one defective gene of feeble-mindedness, mates with a feeble-minded individual, their offspring *may* be normal if the one normal gene of the intelligent parent pairs with the defective gene of the feeble-minded parent. For the normal gene is held to be dominant and the defective gene recessive.[17] On the other hand, when two feeble-minded persons mate, if their defect is caused by the same hereditary factor, the chances are very great that a large proportion of their children will be feeble-minded. Goddard found that all but six of 482 children born to parents both of whom were feeble-minded were themselves feeble-minded. In the notorious Kallikak family, out of 222 children born to forty-one mentally defective parents only two were held to be normal.

Summing up, then, it may be said that the offspring of parents both of whom are normal *may be* feeble-minded if both parents are "carriers," i.e., carry one gene of feeble-mindedness. For these defective genes may, in Nature's shuffle, be paired and result in a feeble-minded child. But it does not follow that the son of this child, if he should grow up and mate, would be feeble-minded. He might or he might not, depending upon how the parental genes paired. Even if a normal and a feeble-minded person married, it could not be predicted with accuracy whether a child of the union would be normal or mentally defective. Nor could a correct prediction be made regarding the grandchildren of the original pair. What *is* certain is that the offspring of two defective parents whose feeble-mindedness is due to the same hereditary factor or factors will, in an overwhelming number of cases, reveal the parental defect.

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[16] See Holmes, *op. cit.*, pp. 42–46.

[17] *Ibid.*, pp. 39–40. Also Jennings, *op. cit.*, pp. 8–11.

The foregoing discussion of hereditary defects and their transmission may appear confusing to the reader; but a sound understanding of a few fundamental facts of genetics is an essential preliminary to considering any eugenic program for improving the human stock, for breeding better men.

WHAT CAN EUGENICS DO ABOUT IT?

The practical program of eugenics may be divided into two types of procedure—the negative and the positive. As its name suggests, the negative program is concerned with efforts to prevent the propagation of the unfit, while the positive program is designed to encourage larger families among the groups believed to have those traits of health and vigor, of intelligence, industry, initiative, social responsibility, and public spirit so valuable in society. It has frequently been remarked that the practical program of negative eugenics has been much more clearly and definitely conceived than the complementary plans of positive eugenics.

Negative Eugenics.

In advocating measures for reducing the number of defectives in society, eugenists are seeking to lessen any possible downward trend of evolution. The facts brought to light regarding the number of criminals, feeble-minded, epileptics, and insane in the United States, both those confined in institutions and at large in the community are appalling and urgently call for intelligent and sustained efforts to lessen the numbers of the ill-born. In 1934 about 184,000 individuals were confined in penal institutions in the United States, about 320,000 in institutions for the insane, and nearly 90,000 in State institutions for the feeble-minded and epileptics. Of the latter group only a small proportion is under institutional care. The White House Conference on Child Health and Protection reported that among children alone about 850,000 are definitely feeble-minded and 150,000 are epileptic. The number of these defectives at large has been estimated as anywhere from 400,000 to 2,000,000.[18] Such facts concerning the army of defectives in our midst, who are in most instances a heavy grief to their families and a burden to society, seem to cry aloud for ameliorative action.

What, then, can be done? All persons having insanity, feeble-mindedness, hæmophilia, epilepsy, and other defects that are *known* to be due to hereditary causes—to single-pair gene defects—can be prevented from propagating. The difficulty, of course, is to determine whether, for example, certain cases of insanity or feeble-mindedness are caused by environmental and bodily conditions which can be corrected or by defective genes in both parents. However, at this stage of scientific knowledge it should be possible to diagnose the source of these defects with some accuracy. By thus preventing persons afflicted with serious hereditary defects from having offspring, the defect, *so far as it is due to single-pair defective genes in both parents,* can be rooted out in a generation. This is encouraging. But let us recall that only a small proportion of serious defects is caused by parents both of whom have the defective genes. As we have seen, by far the greater number of defectives in our society has been born of normal parents each carrying one defective and one normal gene. In the case of feeble-mindedness, these parents account for about 89 per cent of all feeble-minded persons. By preventing propagation of the feeble-minded in one generation, then, we get rid of about 11 per cent of feeble-mindedness in our population.[19]

Is this procedure worth-while? It would seem that it *is* eminently worth-while, since the number of feeble-minded is steadily, though slowly reduced, due to the fact that no feeble-minded persons will now be allowed to mate with normal men and women, and every reduction is clear gain. Moreover, a feeble-minded mother makes a poor nurse and guide of her children and so, too, does a weak-minded father. On this ground alone it would appear wise to prevent these defectives from becoming parents.

In those cases of insanity that are known to be hereditary, the same preventive measures should be employed as in the case of feeble-mindedness. But environment seems to play a more important rôle in insanity than in feeble-mindedness. Where the insanity is due to the inheritance of an unstable nervous system, as some types are, a wholesome, harmonious environment, with few shocks, might prevent the disease from appearing. Mental health, as Holmes points out, is a product of both heredity and environment and in different persons now one factor and now the other plays the leading part. However, in certain types of mental disease, such as Huntington's chorea, dementia præcox and manic-depressive insanity, the hereditary factor is predominant.[20] On the other hand, there are many alienists who minimize the importance of hereditary causes in insanity and stress such causal factors as disturbances of the endocrine glands, shock, focal infections, and alcoholism. Cases have been known of insane persons being cured by extraction of an infected tooth or removal of diseased tonsils. Yet there is such an impressive body of evidence that certain types of insanity are largely hereditary, that these types, at least, should be prevented from propagating. Also an insane parent can hardly be a "good parent" in the commonly understood meaning of the term—another sound reason for excluding him or her from propagation.

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[18] Ellsworth Huntington, *Tomorrow's Children* (John Wiley and Sons, Inc., New York, 1935), p. 41.

[19] See Jennings, *op. cit.,* for a complete discussion.

Criminality seems to be even more a product of environmental influences—of poverty, slum homes, vicious neighborhoods, absence of playgrounds and sports, lack of family training and weak school influences—than it is of heredity. Yet a child may inherit from his parents a bad collection of genes. If such defective hereditary traits are not hindered from inciting to non-social action by wholesome family influences and good education, the youth may easily become delinquent or criminal. Here, however, the practical eugenist who advocates prevention of propagation by criminals is on uncertain ground. Too many criminals represent *society's failures* more than bad heredity to make wholesale sterilization altogether justifiable. There remains, however, as an argument in favor of excluding repeated criminals from propagation, the fact that it is very doubtful that these men and women could make good homes for growing children.

When we consider other undesirable types, characterized by stupidity, laziness, dependency, and delinquency, we are clearly dealing with cases where environmental influences play an imporant rôle; and genetics can supply us with no reliable method of determining the relative part played by heredity and nurture. On the whole, however, a greater proportion of poor and partially defective genes will be found in a group of dependents and delinquents than in a numerically equal group of self-supporting, law-abiding individuals. By making knowledge of birth control methods easy to obtain *and to practise* by dependent groups, eugenists may slowly improve the quality of mankind. But they should clearly recognize that the gains made will be very tardy in appearing. The same pairs of genes found in dependent groups, if combined differently, so that an unfavorable gene from one parent would be offset by a favorable gene from the other, would produce industrious, self-supporting individuals. These dull, delinquent, lazy, dependent persons known to charitable societies were unlucky in the gene combinations allotted to them. But—and this should be clearly understood—the same bad gene combinations may fall to the lot of offspring of superior parents, as has often been observed, so that these children are also stupid and lazy and may even become delinquent or dependent. No high wall separates the inferior from the superior groups; individuals not rarely pass from one class to the other. In general, nevertheless, a larger proportion of unfavorable genes will be found in groups of delinquents and dependents than in self-respecting, self-supporting groups.

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[20] See Holmes, *op. cit.*, pp. 16–28.

Does this justify the application of thoroughgoing, drastic, eugenic measures to reduce the offspring of the dependent groups to none at all or to the lowest possible minimum? Hardly, since by means of changes in gene combinations "successive generations pass from one group to the other." As Professor Jennings says:

> It is hard to imagine a more elusive task than the prevention of the formation of those combinations of genes that under certain conditions produce stupid, delinquent or criminal individuals. If all such persons were prevented from propagation, *other conditions remaining the same,* this would make only a very little difference to the number present in the next generation. *It may be doubted whether the change would be detected except by refined statistical examination.*[21]

What are the "other conditions" to which Professor Jennings refers? They are those injurious factors such as poverty, ignorant nurture, bad social influences, poor education, etc., already referred to. To change our economic system root and branch so as greatly to lessen poverty, establish economic security, and fit the job to the man; to improve the quality and increase the types of education, so as to meet the mental needs and life problems of a wide variety of children and adults; to wipe out slum homes and neighborhoods, breeders of crime; to multiply the amount and kinds of wholesome recreation open free to the public—these are a few of the titanic tasks that challenge this generation. To quote Jennings again: "We must cling to anything that these environmental changes can do, for what they accomplish they can do promptly in a generation or two; while changes in these matters by means of eugenics will require immensely long periods." [22]

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[21] Jennings, *op. cit.,* p. 245. Italics mine.

Yet eugenic measures, such as discouraging large families among dependents and stupid people, should be taken, in the well-founded belief that in the course of generations some improvement in the quality of the population will result.

The methods advocated by negative eugenics are (1) spread of birth-control information by legalization and popular education, especially among the dependent and unfit; (2) segregation; (3) sterilization; (4) limitation of marriage. By wiping off the statute books of the federal government and the States all prohibitions of the importation, sale, and transportation by mail and common carriers of contraceptive information and appliances, by permitting the establishment of birth-control clinics under scientific safeguards, and by encouraging education of physicians in contraception, and by them of the public, much could be done to lower the birth rate in families characterized by dependency and delinquency.

The method of *segregation* has been primarily employed by society to protect itself against dangerous types, as criminals and hardened delinquents, and to ensure that the feeble-minded and insane shall not propagate by separating the sexes in institutions. The cost to society of segregation of the grossly unfit is enormous. Dr. Huntington estimates that the expense of law enforcement alone is close to four billion dollars. He adds:

> The support of more than 400,000 persons in insane asylums and institutions for the feebleminded and epileptic, together with approximately 200,000 in prison at all times and close to 2,000,000 feebleminded persons who are supported in homes costs another billion or so. . . . If segregation is to be of

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[22] *Ibid.*, p. 246.

outstanding eugenic importance . . . the country must spend huge sums in confining a great number of people throughout the child-bearing period.[23]

Because of the appalling cost of segregation, as well as its uncertainty, since, for one reason or another, the inmates of institutions come and go, the *sterilization* of unfit social defectives is receiving increased attention at present. In the case of males, sterilization is a simple operation called *vasectomy* which consists in severing a small tube that carries the sperm from the testes. The operation can be performed under a local anæsthetic. In the case of females, however, a major surgical operation is required that involves an abdominal incision and severing of the Fallopian tubes. If uncomplicated, the operation is no more serious than an appendectomy. It is a remarkable fact that sterilization of an individual need not destroy his sex life, since sexual desire and capacity for sexual activity remain the same. The only effect is the beneficent one of rendering the person infertile, so that he cannot propagate offspring to inherit parental defects.

About a generation ago the first eugenic sterilizations in the United States were performed by Dr. Sharp of the Indiana State Reformatory at Jeffersonville with the consent of the inmates. The first State law legalizing the sterilization of grossly unfit inmates of institutions was enacted in Indiana in 1907. Since then over thirty States have put similar laws on their statute books and in twenty-eight States they are still operative. These statutes (varying with the States) provide for the sterilization of the feeble-minded, insane, idiots, epileptics, imbeciles, rapists, moral degenerates, victims of hereditary recurrent insanity, habitual criminals, and hereditary criminals.[24] A glance through this lengthy list will probably raise a question in the minds of all persons well informed in the facts of genetics. Who shall say, in the cases of "moral degenerates" and "habitual criminals" how much of their defects is owing to heredity and how much to bad environments? On the other hand, these abnormal persons cannot make good homes for children nor will they be desirable parents. If these social defectives are to be sterilized, however, it should be with their own consent or that of their families. Indeed, as the experience of California convincingly shows, it is generally advisable to obtain the consent of the individual to sterilization, if he is mentally capable, or if not, that of his relatives. Otherwise, antagonism is created and legal actions follow.

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[23] Huntington, *Tomorrow's Children* (John Wiley and Sons, Inc., New York, 1935), pp. 54–55.

[24] *Birth Control Review,* April, 1933, p. 86.

The number of official sterilizations performed in the United States up to January 1, 1936 was 23,092. Of the twenty-eight States that have sterilization laws in operation, California is far in the lead in eugenic sterilizations, having operated on 10,801 defectives and criminals up to the end of 1935. Next to California comes Virginia with a record of 2,386 sterilizations. There follow Michigan with 1,555, Kansas with 1,509, Minnesota, 1,154 and Oregon 1,047. The remaining States have each sterilized less than 1,000 defectives.[25] That physicians and heads of institutions for defectives have been conservative in using their powers is shown by the fact that no one has yet brought a charge that the State has made a eugenical error in preventing reproduction by any individual whose offspring might have been a useful member of society.[26]

Probably California has the most carefully framed sterilization law of any State. Nevertheless, President E. S. Gosney of the Human Betterment Foundation of Pasadena has prepared a model sterilization bill as a revision of the California statutes. The bill provides for a State Board of Eugenics whose duty it shall be to pass on applications for eugenic sterilization. When it appears to the superintendent or director of a State institution for the insane or the mentally defective or to the warden of a prison or reformatory, that an inmate of such institution would, if released without sterilization, be likely "to procreate a child or children who would have a tendency to serious physical, mental, or nervous disease or deficiency," the superintendent, after consulting with his medical staff, shall recommend to the Eugenics Board that an operation be performed upon the said patient for the prevention of parenthood. The recommendation shall be in writing and accompanied by a certified statement containing the history of the patient, so far as it bears upon the recommendation for sterilization, together with the specific reasons why sterilization is recommended. If the Board approves, it must send to the Superintendent within thirty days a written order, signed by at least two members of the Board, directing him to proceed with the sterilization. But the act carefully provides that nothing in the law shall authorize the Board of Eugenics to interfere with the right of the patient or his representatives to select a competent physician of his own choice to perform the operation at his own expense. Moreover—and this is important—the Board must send a copy of the sterilization order to the patient's legal guardian or known next of kin, setting forth the reasons why sterilization is held desirable. With the order must be sent *a notification that the patient or his legal representative has the right to appeal to the courts* if he disapproves the order. Such appeal should be filed with the State Board of Eugenics within ten days after the notification is received; and the Superior Court of the county in which the patient is detained shall arrange as early as possible for a hearing of the case. On the other hand, if the next of kin or legal guardian approve the order for sterilization, he shall express his consent in writing. Thereupon the operation shall take place at such time as the Superintendent of the institution shall designate.[27]

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[25] New York *Times,* March 30, 1936. From a report of the Human Betterment Foundation.

[26] See Laughlin, *Birth Control Review,* April, 1933, p. 87.

Of course the merits of this proposed act are that the rights of the institutional patient are carefully safeguarded, first, by the provision that the superintendent cannot act on his own initiative but must apply for authority to the State Board of Eugenics; and secondly by the legal provision that the written consent of relatives or a legal guardian must be secured before the operation can take place. If consent is not granted, then the next of kin may appeal to the courts for a hearing.

Several European countries including Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Germany have recently passed sterilization laws. The eugenic statutes enacted under the Nazi régime give recognition to the personal rights of defective persons or their relatives. Suspected defectives are summoned before Hereditary Health Courts in large numbers and a huge army, numbering nearly 170,000, has been deprived of reproductive powers in two years.[28] Such wholesale methods, while allowing appeal to a higher court, are in sharp opposition to the procedures of other states.

A fourth method of negative eugenics advocated by some leaders is *limitation of marriage*. Far too many marriages of young people under eighteen, and even under sixteen, occur in the United States. In recent years it has been estimated that there are in this country 600,000 women who were married at the age of sixteen or less. Such early marriages, before the girl has attained full maturity and before her too youthful mate has achieved economic security are wholly undesirable from a eugenic and social standpoint. The children born to such immature couples are apt to be numerous and poorly provided for. As stated in a previous chapter, the marriage age in a large number of States should be sharply raised. Also, to prevent hasty, ill-considered marriages an interval of at least five days should elapse between application for a marriage license and its issuance.[29]

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[27] See the Model Bill in *Birth Control Review,* April, 1933, pp. 107–109.

[28] New York *Times,* March 25, 1935.

The Program of Positive Eugenics.

The differential birth rate is a matter of deep concern to eugenists. The fact that educated people, engaged in socially valuable work, tend to marry relatively late and have small families means that the laboring classes, who marry young on the whole and often have numerous families, are furnishing a large proportion of the new generation. Hence our population is ill balanced. Whether wage-earners have as much innate ability as more privileged groups has not been demonstrated—there is some evidence to the contrary. But even if they were as well endowed by nature, parents in this group cannot give their children the social and cultural advantages found in the homes of the well educated. "A healthy population," says Ellsworth Huntington, President of the American Eugenics Society, "ought to remain well balanced with at least as much growth at the top as at the bottom." [30]

A positive program for correcting the ill balance of our population and encouraging larger families among the intelligent and socially capable—and this applies to working groups as well as business and professional people—is slowly being tentatively worked out by certain leaders in the eugenic movement. The first step in such a suggested program is the extension of eugenic education to all intelligent persons of school and adult age, especially to social leaders and to the youth of our high schools, colleges, and universities. Such education, according to Dr. Huntington, should include sound courses in biology, genetics, and eugenics, together with study of the science of population, the family in its social setting, and eugenics in its relation to social problems, such as crime and dependency. In addition there is real need of lectures throughout the country on eugenic problems and "the widespread distribution of thoroughly scientific but easily understood discussions of the

[29] See Huntington, *Tomorrow's Children,* pp. 59, 60.
[30] *Ibid.,* p. 61.

many phases of eugenics." [31] The radio, also, could be made a valuable means of removing the general ignorance about eugenic problems.

But the positive program of eugenics does not stop with education. One of the primary reasons why intelligent people tend to have small families is because these persons have high standards, not alone of living, but of rearing and educating children—standards not at all in harmony with their incomes. The economic factor plays an important rôle in family limitation. Certain eugenists are interested in a possible plan for a family allowance so arranged that income would be adjusted to size of family. The plan has been tried in France and Belgium with respect to wage-earners, as we have seen, but the proposed eugenic scheme differs from the French system of the family wage in several respects. In the first place eugenists would have the beneficiaries carefully selected individually, with regard to the mental and physical qualities of the parents and their ancestors. This is regarded as the "ideal method," even though it is recognized that some method of group selection of able parents, for example, professors and clergymen, is at present more practicable although distinctly less certain in results. The plan would provide for "a sliding scale of allowances for children based both on the family earnings and on the number of children, so that the fifth child, for example, may entitle the family to a larger increase in income than the first." Furthermore, the tentative plan proposes that some provision be made for the increasing cost of children as they grow older, such as widespread provision of scholarships at good schools and at universities for children of ability belonging to families of moderate income. Can such a scheme be made practical?

In addition to a family allowance system for parents of high quality, it is proposed that income and inheritance taxes be so adjusted as to increase the exemption for children and make this exemption progressively larger as the number of children increases. At the same time the exemption for childless married couples would be lessened.

Because of the financial difficulties encountered by young married couples in having children, the proposal is made that their immediate relatives accept some responsibility for meeting the expenses involved in the birth and nurture of children. "It is to be hoped," writes Dr. Huntington, "that a new custom will arise among us so that long before the young people are engaged, far-sighted parents and relatives will adopt a systematic, even though small, plan for making safe investments to be used for the expenses of grandchildren. A few thousand dollars spent in this way are worth far more than when received as a lump sum in a bequest."[32] Whether parents and relatives can be persuaded to abandon the age-old belief that young people should stand "on their own" after marriage and meet of themselves the heavy expenses entailed in having children, is an interesting question. Social ideas and customs *do* change with altered circumstances—but very tardily.

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[31] Huntington, *op. cit.* pp. 69–70.

Another proposal embodied in this program of positive eugenics is designed to relieve mothers from the strain of constant attendance upon young children and to give them some free time for recreation and enjoyment. It is felt that motherhood should be made a pleasure and privilege, not the stern and self-denying discipline it now is for some intelligent mothers with tastes and capacities rusting from disuse. There can be no doubt that the self-sacrifice and the sheer hard work required of educated mothers in the small-income groups in bringing up children is a potent influence working to limit the size of families. It is therefore suggested that the individualistic methods now in vogue in caring for young children be replaced by the *coöperation* so much needed at present in many phases of modern life. Nurseries in apartment houses and neighborhoods, in the activities of which mothers coöperated on fixed days, would relieve women of much of the heavy, daily responsibility of child-rearing and give them some free time. Of course coöperation need not stop with nurseries but may be extended to other fields of household work such as laundering, cleaning, and cooking. In Sweden coöperative houses furnish nurseries for the care of little children as a matter of course; and at least one large coöperative apartment house provides all the other services for the benefit of employed parents. Our present society, marked by individualistic, competitive effort, must yield, it would seem, to a social order in which coöperation—"all for one and one for all," as the inspirer of agricultural coöperation in Denmark phrased it—plays a paramount rôle, even in that highly individualistic institution—the family.[33]

Summary.

Briefly, then, the program of practical eugenics is designed to benefit the family and society in two ways. First is the plan of negative eugenics to improve the quality of human stock by preventing the propagation of the feeble-minded, insane, hereditary epileptics, and—in some instances—hardened criminals. Such a program offers some difficulties, not only in determining whether the undesirable traits are in truth hereditary but in eliminating such characters from human nature when they are proved to be genetic. The positive program of eugenics would select certain groups having traits like intelligence, efficiency, a sense of responsibility, etc., and, by means of various forms of financial aid and coöperative services, render it more easy and practicable for these groups to have more children.

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[32] Huntington, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

[33] For the entire positive program of eugenics see Huntington, *Tomorrow's Children,* pp. 60–85. The author is indebted to this work for the foregoing sketch.

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1. The Genetic Foundation of Human Nature and in What Degree It May Be Changed.
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3. Inferior Stocks and How to Lessen Them.
   Leonard Darwin, *What Is Eugenics?* (Galton Publishing Co., Inc., New York, 1929), Chs. VII–XVII.
4. The Program of Practical Eugenics.
   Ellsworth Huntington, *Tomorrow's Children* (John Wiley and Sons, Inc., New York, 1935), pp. 35–113.

ADDITIONAL SELECTED READINGS

1. Ellsworth Huntington, *Tomorrow's Children* (John Wiley and Sons, Inc., New York, 1935), entire.
2. *Birth Control Review,* April, 1933.
   "Sterilization Number," Entire.
3. Raymond Pearl, *The Present Status of Eugenics* (The Sociological Press, 1928), entire work.
4. H. S. Jennings, "Eugenics," *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences,* Vol. V.
5. J. Rumney, "The Problem of Differential Fertility," *Population,* Vol. II, No. 1, November, 1935, pp. 3–23.

CHAPTER XVI

ILLEGITIMACY AS A PROBLEM IN CHILD WELFARE

SOCIAL AND LEGAL HISTORY OF ILLEGITIMACY

ILLEGITIMACY, like prostitution, appears to be well-nigh as old as organized society. However, it is probably true that in ancient times the child born of irregular sexual unions was not so harshly stigmatized and outlawed as was the case among Western nations after the establishment of Christianity. In its desire to uproot licentiousness and exalt monogamic marriage, the Christian Church encouraged stern social condemnation, not only of erring unmarried mothers but of their innocent offspring. Therefore, in nominally Christian lands, the illegitimate child has borne the full weight of social disapproval and ostracism for the sins of his parents.

The heavy social penalty exacted of women who bore children out of wedlock, together with economic difficulties, resulted in the prevalence of infanticide and child exposure during the Middle Ages. Disturbed by these conditions, the Church took steps to care at least for the helpless infants exposed at its very doors. As early as the sixth century of the Christian era, foundling asylums were established in Italy, and in course of time they were founded in all the large cities of western Europe. The first "tour" or turnbox, a sort of rude cradle, one side of which was left open to the street to receive an infant, was fixed in the wall of a foundling hospital in Rome at the end of the twelfth century. Any mother wishing to leave a baby placed it in the box, rang a bell and slipped away undiscovered, knowing that her child would be received in the foundling hospital. "Tours" were quite generally established in Spain, Portugal, and Italy during the centuries that succeeded, but they were not officially introduced into France and Belgium until 1811. In both countries, they were abolished after a period of fifty years' trial, because it had become clearly evident that this supposed preventive of infant deaths in reality resulted in an enormously high mortality rate among these abandoned babies.

Foundling hospitals, however, lived on in Europe and the United States until recent times. Indeed, these institutions are still numerous in Austria, Italy, England, and the United States, but they have fallen under a ban in France and Germany. The Foundling Hospital of London, established in 1739 "to prevent the frequent murders of poor miserable children at their birth," was granted public funds by the House of Commons until the evils connected with its administration became so scandalous that the support was withdrawn.

Illegitimacy Laws in Great Britain.

The old common law of England, which was transplanted to the American colonies and became the basis of the laws of the forty-eight States of the Union, was ruthless in its denial of rights to the child born out of lawful wedlock. The "bastard," the term applied to the illegitimate child in English law for many centuries, is described as *filius nullius*—nobody's child—and this designation clearly describes his status. Common law recognized no *legal* relationship even between mother and child, far less between the father and his offspring. Furthermore, English law departed from the legal systems of the Continent in refusing to allow the legitimation of the child by the subsequent marriage of his parents, although canon law in England recognized such legitimation. The natural claims of the mother were, however, recognized by the common law to the extent of granting to her the custody of her child. But the illegitimate child in England had no rights of inheritance from mother or father.

Such remained the legal situation in England with respect to illegitimacy until the reign of Queen Elizabeth. In 1576 a law was enacted compelling support of a bastard child by its father if his identity could be established. This legislation has been the outstanding feature of the bastardy law of England to this day, and its provisions have been incorporated in the laws of the American States. In 1918 the Elizabethan law requiring support by the father was amended and improved by Parliament; but in all other respects the illegitimacy laws of England continued to bear as heavily on the illegitimate child as was the case in the Middle Ages.

In 1926, however, the spread of more humane and enlightened ideas regarding the child born out of wedlock was reflected in the enactment of a new Legitimacy Act. The law gave clear recognition to the legitimizing of a child whose father was domiciled in England or Wales by the marriage of his parents after his birth, except in cases where either parent was married to a third person at the time of the child's birth. A change was also made in the harsh provisions of the old illegitimacy law regarding inheritance. A legitimated person may now inherit most kinds of property from his parents. But in the case of entailed property a legitimated child may be compelled to yield his rights to a younger son, since he ranks in age as if he had been born on the day of his legitimation. The Act of 1926 further provides that an illegitimate child may succeed to his mother's (not his father's) property in case the mother dies intestate. Likewise, the mother may inherit from an illegitimate child if he dies intestate.[1]

The Norwegian Law.

Although Great Britain's most recent legislation goes some distance in recognizing the rights of children born out of wedlock, it falls far short of the most enlightened laws advocated in America at the present time and actually in effect in Norway and other Scandinavian countries. The Norwegian illegitimacy laws, enacted in January, 1916, are greatly in advance of those in most civilized countries by reason of their provisions to secure a full measure of justice to the illegitimate child. Under these laws (with few exceptions) the child born out of marriage *has the same legal status as if it were legitimate.* The Norwegian illegitimate child is entitled to bear his father's name (when paternity has been established) and to inherit from his father and his father's family, except as to real estate, as if it were legitimate. The child has *rights of maintenance* from both father and mother, and the law further provides that he "shall be trained and educated in a manner befitting the economic station of the father, but if the mother is the better situated economically, then in her station." Although the law stipulates that the illegitimate child shall remain with the mother, if she fails to care for it properly a county official, who is always a lawyer, may place the child in the care of the father or of some other suitable person who becomes its guardian. Perhaps the most admirable feature of the Norwegian law is the frank acceptance by the state of responsibility for discovering the paternity of an illegitimate child in those instances, by no means rare, where the mother refuses to reveal it.

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[1] Maud I. Crofts, *Women under English Law* (Butterworth and Co., London, 1928), pp. 57–60.

Recent Provisions in Germany.

Ever since the World War a group of reformers in Republican Germany had urged the enactment of legislation in that country closely similar to the Norwegian illegitimacy laws. Their active agitation finally resulted in legislation establishing a national system of Children's Bureaus. The law was enacted in 1922 but did not go into effect until 1924. A statistical report of the work of the Bureaus made in 1929 showed that there were in the previous year more than 1,200 of these institutions outside of Saxony. The Bureaus were serving as legal guardians of 560,000 children, most of whom were born out of wedlock. Thus Republican Germany, like her Scandinavian neighbors, accepted the principle that the state is responsible for the welfare and ultimate guardianship of its illegitimate children.[2]

Illegitimacy Laws in the United States: Theories of Reform.

In the United States legislation regarding illegitimacy has been somewhat more progressive than in England, although the humanizing of the laws has been slow and halting. Three important changes in the common law inherited from England have been rather generally adopted in the American commonwealths: (1) the issue of certain annulled marriages have been declared legitimate; (2) the subsequent marriage of the parents of an illegitimate child is recognized as legitimating the offspring in almost every State; (3) rights of inheritance between the illegitimate child and the mother who dies intestate have been created by law in many States. These alterations in the common law began to be made at the close of the Revolutionary War, and accessions to them have been made from time to time. In thirty-five States, the issue of void or annulled marriages are declared legitimate, with certain restrictive clauses.

As we have seen, the statute law of England made no provision for legitimation of a child until 1926. In general, the laws of the American States are more generous in this regard. At least nine States permit the legitimation of a child *by judicial proceeding,* and all but two recognize the marriage of his parents as legitimizing the child. In many States, moreover, the law provides that the father of an illegitimate child, by publicly acknowledging it as his own and receiving it into his family renders it legitimate. This is an informal method of legitimation. In States where no such provision is made for legitimating a child, virtually the same effect can be accomplished by legal adoption of the child.

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[2] *News Letter,* Children's Bureau, United States Department of Labor, December 14, 1929.

With respect to rights of inheritance from the father, the legal practice of the American States varies. In twenty States, illegitimate children are permitted to inherit from the father if they have been publicly acknowledged by him or formally legitimated, or, as in the case of Iowa and Wisconsin (1917), if paternity has been proven during the lifetime of the father. Rarely, indeed, do the American States recognize the father's right of custody of the child. Illinois and Utah, however, do concede this right to the father when the child is ten years of age. In Illinois custody is given to the father, in case the mother is an unfit guardian, at an even earlier age; and in Utah custody may pass to the father before the child is ten years old if the mother consents.[3]

As previously stated, the bulk of legislation in the United States (as in England) regarding the relation between father and "natural" child, is concerned with compulsory support. In England, the bastardy law of 1575–1576 was designed to relieve the parish of the burden of support of illegitimate children. It provided that two justices of the peace might "take order for the keeping of every such bastard child by charging such mother or reputed father, with the payment of money weekly or other sustentation for the relief of such child, in such wise as they shall think meet and convenient. . . ." If father or mother failed to observe such an order, he or she was to be confined in the "common gaol," there to remain until surety was given for the performance of the order, or at the discretion of the justices. This legislation remained on the statute books of England without important change for more than two centuries. In 1914, an act was passed providing for the appointment of a collecting officer whose duty it is to enforce the payments the law demands from the father. It is pleasant to note that the grim old word "bastardy" in proceedings for support has given place in English legal verbiage to the term "affiliation."

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[3] "Analysis and Tabular Summary of State Laws Relating to Illegitimacy in the United States, in Effect January 1, 1928 . . ." United States Department of Labor, Children's Bureau, Chart No. 16 (Washington, 1929).

Early in their history, the American colonies enacted bastardy support laws similar to those of England. It is a striking fact that, in many instances, these laws have undergone no radical alteration until recent times. "The most striking feature of bastardy legislation," declares Professor Ernst Freund, "is its stationary character, indicative of a lack of thought or movement as regards the relation of the father to the illegitimate child, or perhaps to a certain extent also of an extreme conservatism of sentiment."[4] Bastardy proceedings in most States have these features in common: A woman pregnant with or delivered of a bastard child brings complaint against the putative father to a justice of the peace; this magistrate issues a warrant against the man named in the complaint, directing him to appear at a hearing; a preliminary hearing takes place at which the accused may prove his innocence, if possible; an order is issued binding him over for trial if he fails to exculpate himself, the said trial to take place after the birth of the child; a trial follows, at which the defendant may demand a jury; judgment, if adverse to the defendant, provides for his maintenance of the child; periodical payments for support are made; the court is empowered to enforce these payments and demand security for the same. In those States, ten in number, where non-support and abandonment laws are made to apply to illegitimate as well as to legitimate children, the duty of maintenance can be enforced by criminal prosecution. It is a deplorable fact that no bastardy support legislation has been enacted in three American States and the territory of Alaska.[5] Such laws were not put on the statute books of the District of Columbia until 1912; and of Oregon, until 1917.

The amount of the support is usually in the discretion of the court or sometimes of the jury. The order of judgment commonly demands not one lump sum but annual, monthly, or weekly payments. Unfortunately the amount is fixed by statute in some States and ranges from $1 to $3 a month in Arkansas, and $40 the first year in Tennessee, to $200 for the first year and not exceeding $150 per year for the next succeeding seventeen years in Utah. These niggardly sums, fixed by the laws of a few States, probably fairly well reflect popular sentiment with respect to the needs of an illegitimate child, for Freund notes that the allowances fixed by courts and juries in several cases are no more generous. The length of time during which the support is to be given likewise varies in State laws. Where no age limit is stated, the minority of the child would be the maximum period. Several States have set the age limit at eighteen; others fix the age at sixteen; in the States of Florida and Illinois the age is set at ten years. In Arkansas a father's responsibility for support actually ceases when the child is seven years old and in Tennessee when it is three.[6]

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[4] Freund, "Illegitimacy Laws of the United States," p. 29. *Bureau Publications*, No. 42, 1919. United States Children's Bureau.

[5] "Analysis and Tabular Summary of State Laws Relating to Illegitimacy in the United States. . . ." Children's Bureau, Chart No. 16 (Washington, 1929).

PREVALENCE OF ILLEGITIMACY

There can be little question that illegitimacy is more prevalent on the continent of Europe than in most States of America. The average percentage of illegitimate births for the period of 1919–1923 in selected European countries follows: [7]

Austria	22.1	Germany	10.76
Hungary	7.66	England and Wales	4.73
Belgium	6.36	Italy	4.61
Denmark	10.86	Sweden	14.51
Spain	6.07	Switzerland	4.05
The Netherlands	2.02		

With few exceptions these are high illegitimacy rates when compared with the percentages found in American States in the registration area, where births are carefully registered. The percentage of illegitimate births in these States for the year 1923 was 2.33.[8]

Following are the illegitimacy rates in 1933 for selected States exclusive of Massachusetts and California which do not require statements concerning legitimacy. These rates are uniformly larger than ten years ago and are markedly higher for Negroes than for whites.

As might be expected, the economic and social conditions in congested areas of large cities are responsible for a rise in percentages of illegitimate births. Thus it was found that Berlin, in the period 1905–1909, showed 18.1 per cent of illegitimate births; Munich, 27.8; Paris, 25.5; Petrograd, 20.2; Rome, 16.5; Stockholm, 33.4; and Vienna, 30.1. London was the only city that showed a lower rate than the country as a whole, namely 3.5, as against 4 for England and Wales in the same

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[6] *Ibid.*

[7] Lundberg, "Children of Illegitimate Birth and Measures for their Protection," p. 3. United States Children's Bureau, Pub. No. 166 (Washington, 1926).

[8] *Ibid.*

ILLEGITIMATE BIRTHS, 1933

State	*Number per 1,000 total births*
Alabama	94.8
White	19.4
Colored	214.0
Connecticut	16.9
Georgia	84.5
White	16.8
Colored	181.2
Illinois	24.7
Louisiana	88.3
White	20.4
Colored	183.9
Michigan	26.2
Montana	21.2
New Jersey	22.5
New York	20.2
Oregon	17.6
Tennessee	42.3
White	22.4
Colored	149.5
Utah	10.5
Vermont	24.6
Washington	23.8
Wyoming	14.7

period.[9] Although high illegitimacy rates are not so marked in American cities, yet in 1924 the percentage of illegitimate births in Buffalo was 2.7, in Grand Rapids 4.83, in St. Paul 3.95. The Negro illegitimacy rates in certain cities are very high. For example, in Baltimore in 1924 the percentage of illegitimate births among Negroes was 20.77 and in Washington 16.43.[10]

For the entire United States, the total number of illegitimate births in the registration area in 1933 was 77,167. In that year the number of illegitimate births among Negroes, who comprise less than 10 per cent of the people of the United States, was 42,277, while the remaining white population of over 90 per cent was responsible for 34,890 illegitimate births, or 45.2 per cent.[11]

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[9] Lundberg and Lenroot, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

[10] Emma Lundberg, "Children of Illegitimate Birth and Measures for their Protection," p. 6. Children's Bureau Publication, No. 166 (Washington, 1926).

[11] *Birth, Stillbirth and Infant Mortality Statistics,* United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census (Washington, 1936).

CAUSATIVE FACTORS IN ILLEGITIMACY

With almost complete unanimity, social investigators agree upon a variety of causes, both personal and social, for the prevalence of illegitimacy. Mangold,[12] while giving due weight to other factors, holds that the chief causes of illegitimacy in the United States are "ignorance and low ideals." To these he adds defective home life, overcrowding, unwholesome amusements, evil companions, lack of moral training, broken homes, and alcoholism. This enumeration corresponds closely to that of Kammerer, who has made an intensive analysis of the case records of 500 unmarried mothers.[13] Kammerer lists the causes and conditions responsible for illegitimacy as follows: no home protection, as in the case of girl immigrants who have preceded their families to America; vicious neighborhood conditions, evil companions, bad employment conditions, demoralizing recreation, educational disadvantages, bad home conditions, early sex experience, abnormal physical condition (apparently not an important factor), sexual suggestibility and mental abnormality. By far the most powerful factor in all the melancholy array of causes, Kammerer found to be bad home conditions. In 194 cases out of the 500, such conditions proved to be a major cause of immorality, and in 158 cases, a minor factor. Thus demoralized family life played an important part in causing illegitimacy in 352 instances out of 500, or in 70 per cent of the cases.[14]

In the study of illegitimate children published by the Children's Bureau in 1926, Emma Lundberg classifies the girls and women who become mothers out of wedlock into the following types:

> (a) The mentally subnormal girl who lacks controlling inhibitory instincts and is an easy victim because of helplessness; (b) the young, susceptible girl, unprotected from dangers, who gets into trouble because of lack of understanding or through force; (c) the more mature young woman of good character who is led by false promises or who weakly or rashly follows an instinct that under other conditions would have been normal and social; (d) the really delinquent girl or woman, who knowingly chooses anti-social conduct, her illegitimate maternity being only an incidental evidence of repeated immorality.

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[12] G. B. Mangold, "Children Born Out of Wedlock," *University of Missouri Studies*, Vol. III, No. 3 (1921), p. 41.

[13] Percy G. Kammerer, *The Unmarried Mother, A Study of Five Hundred Cases* (Little, Brown & Company, Boston, 1918).

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 320.

She adds that "the last type is undoubtedly recruited to a considerable extent from the preceding ones"—from girls who, having made one social mistake, become embittered or hardened by social disapproval or by lack of opportunities to return to normal, happy, useful living. It is interesting to note that Miss Lundberg lists also certain types of boys and men who become fathers of illegitimate children. These include "young boys who equally with the mothers need constructive help, and *older men,* many of whom are married, widowed, divorced or separated, and have children of legitimate birth dependent upon them for support." [15]

Mental Abnormality.

There can be no doubt that the inferior mentality of the mothers of the hapless children born out of wedlock is one important factor in causing illegitimacy. In its various studies in this field, made several years ago, the Federal Children's Bureau secured more or less complete information regarding nearly 6,000 children and their mothers and 2,000 fathers. The Massachusetts study showed that 11 per cent of mothers of illegitimate children were diagnosed as feeble-minded, subnormal, or insane, and a further 7 per cent were held to be subnormal. Thus 18 per cent of the unmarried mothers in Massachusetts were mentally inferior or abnormal. In New York State the percentage diagnosed as feeble-minded, subnormal, or insane was 16, with a further 7 per cent thought to be mentally below normal. Milwaukee figures showed 9 per cent mentally abnormal and Philadelphia reported 8 per cent not mentally normal. It must be remembered in connection with these figures, however, that a large proportion of the mothers held to be psychopathic or subnormal had not been given careful mental examinations but had been reported as mentally inferior on the basis of observation. Doubtless, also, as Miss Lundberg points out, the early estimates of the proportion of unmarried mothers who were feeble-minded were overstatements. Yet she admits that analysis of the data for Massachusetts and Boston showed that more than one fifth of the "child-mothers were known to be not normal mentally" and of "the girls 15 years of age and under, 30 per cent were so reported." [16] Clearly our society does not yet furnish adequate provision for discovering and treating mentally subnormal young people. Yet the need of protecting young girls of inferior mentality is urgent, since because of their lack of intelligence, they are peculiarly liable to seduction.

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[15] Lundberg, "Children of Illegitimate Birth and Measures for their Protection," Children's Bureau, Pub. No. 166 (Washington, 1926), p. 12. Italics mine.

[16] Lundberg, *op. cit.,* pp. 13–14.

Home Conditions of Unmarried Mothers.

A serious causative factor of sexual delinquency—as of all forms—is the incidence of broken homes and of homes in which conditions are abnormal. The Children's Bureau investigation already referred to included analyses of the personal histories of unmarried mothers brought to the attention of social agencies in three cities—Philadelphia, Milwaukee, and New York. The analyses disclosed that, of 413 unmarried mothers in Philadelphia, 71 per cent came from homes broken by the death of one parent, or both, by divorce or separation, or who were handicapped by the absence of their parents in the land of their birth. In Milwaukee the percentage of unmarried mothers from such abnormal homes, or absent from their parents, was 49 and in New York City it reached the high figure of 85, owing to the fact that 33 per cent of the parents of 222 unmarried mothers[17] had never been in the United States. Of the 564 unmarried mothers in these three cities who reported their *age at leaving home,* 68 per cent in Philadelphia, 61 per cent in Milwaukee and 55 per cent in New York were under eighteen years. Even more disturbing is the fact that in Philadelphia 48 per cent of these mothers left home *before they were fifteen years of age* while 34 per cent in Milwaukee and 44 per cent in New York did likewise.[18]

Such facts as these reveal social conditions of the utmost gravity which challenge serious thinking on the part of all socially minded persons. Can it be a matter for surprise that young girls leaving home before they are fifteen or eighteen years old to find employment in our large cities should become easy victims of seduction? Similarly, is it astonishing that girls living in homes broken by death or divorce and often abnormal in other respects should depart from the rigid conventions of society? Such conditions cry aloud for a larger measure of social protection and guidance of these young girls, adrift in a preoccupied and indifferent world.

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[17] Reported by one New York agency only.

[18] Mildred D. Mudgett, "Illegitimacy as a Child Welfare Problem," Part 3, p. 242. Children's Bureau, Pub. No. 128 (Washington, 1924).

Demoralizing Neighborhood and Employment Conditions.

However important bad home conditions unquestionably are in bringing about immorality and illegitimacy, they are not the only causative factors. Among the 500 cases of unmarried mothers, Kammerer found "bad environment" a major factor twenty-nine times, and a minor cause fifty-six times. This classification is meant to include demoralizing employment conditions, especially in hotels and restaurants. Vicious companions were a major factor eight times, and a minor cause 136 times. Recreational disadvantages proved a minor factor twenty-two times, and educational disadvantages twenty times. Finally there were fourteen cases in which illegitimacy had been brought about by assault, rape, and incest.[19]

When we reflect upon these findings, we are forced, it would seem, to the conclusion that society does not as yet properly protect adolescent girls. It is equally clear that society has not accepted responsibility for demoralizing neighborhood environments and for employment conditions in hotels, restaurants, stores, and offices, which are notoriously bad, especially in the two former. In 1912, the Juvenile Protective Association of Chicago made an investigation of the girls employed as waitresses and chambermaids in hotels and cafés. Wages were found to be low; the sleeping accommodations inadequate and very inferior; food "second-hand" and served in uncleanly, ill-ventilated rooms. Bad as were the physical conditions, they were far less hazardous than the moral dangers to which these girls were daily exposed. Housekeepers in many of the hotels advised the investigators not to permit girls to enter this occupation, since the immoral overtures of the men guests were winked at by the management, and no oversight of the girls was maintained during their free time. The Association went on record to the effect that the largest proportion of these girls whose sexual habits had become lax, were impelled to immorality first, because of lack of wholesome recreation; second, because of immoral surroundings; third, because of the indifference of people to them and their consequent loneliness; and fourth, because their work, involving much standing and carrying of heavy trays, was so fatiguing that any means of recreation was gladly seized upon.[20] It is encouraging to note that the Juvenile Protective Association made definite recommendations to the effect that (1) a Registration Bureau be established in Chicago where country girls might register and secure advice from socially minded individuals; (2) that a staff of investigators examine the conditions under which girls are working in hotels; (3) that Welfare Secretaries be appointed by social agencies, whose work it would be to understand the difficulties and temptations of these girls and give them friendly help and counsel.

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[19] Kammerer, *op. cit.*, p. 320.

[20] *Ibid.*, pp. 51–57 for a more complete account of the report of the Association.

Popular opinion is also not fully awake to the need for public supervision of places of amusement, parks, and steamboats. One of the ugliest features of our modern civilization is the callous way in which youth's love of pleasure is exploited by age. Social workers are a unit in declaring that indecent movies; unsupervised dance halls, where procurers frequently may be found seeking to induce girls to earn "easy money" by prostitution; cheap cabarets and vaudeville houses, with flaunting signs advertising "shows" sometimes grossly salacious, are potent means of weakening sexual inhibitions in girls with a natural craving for "a good time." A deep conviction of the responsibility of society to regulate and supervise these places is driven home to the minds of social workers, although popular opinion is not sufficiently informed by actual acquaintance with the conditions to demand prompt public action.

UNMARRIED MOTHERS: AGE

It is a disturbing fact that illegitimacy exists among very young girls. A high percentage of unmarried mothers are under twenty-one years of age, and many a girl fifteen to seventeen years old has become an unmarried mother. Mangold finds the modal year is eighteen to nineteen. He has classified the unmarried mothers reported in three large American cities and in the Registration Area of the United States into two age-groups—those under and those over twenty-one years of age. In Washington, D.C., the percentage of single girls under twenty-one who became mothers in 1912 was 37.17; in Philadelphia in 1915, the percentage was 52.9; and in St. Louis in 1912–1913, it was 55.7. In the Birth Registration Area in 1918, 45.2 per cent of unmarried mothers were under twenty years of age.[21] Bingham found that the mediun age of 500 sex delinquents in Waverley House was seventeen years and three months.[22] Of 465 unmarried mothers in Boston, Parker gives the age distribution as follows: [23]

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[21] Mangold, "Children Born out of Wedlock," *University of Missouri Studies*, Vol. III, No. 3 (1921), p. 60.

AGE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Less than 15 years	4	.9
15 years	4	.9
16 years	17	3.6
17 years	29	6.2
18–20 years	135	29.0
21–24 years	164	35.3
25–29 years	68	14.6
30–34 years	23	5.0
35–39 years	12	2.6
40–44 years	8	1.7
45 and over	1	.2

Similarly, Children's Bureau studies have disclosed that 47 per cent of 1,486 unmarried white mothers were under twenty-one years of age and 17 per cent were under eighteen. Only 14 per cent were twenty-five years of age and older, whereas among 4,116 legally married white mothers 29 per cent fell in this age-group. Unmarried mothers are mostly adolescents, too often hardly more than children.[24]

PARENTAGE OF UNMARRIED MOTHERS

It seems fairly well established that a high percentage of the parents of unmarried mothers are of foreign birth. Bingham found that in 65.2 per cent of 500 cases, both parents of sex delinquents in Waverley House were foreign-born; and in 12 per cent of the cases, one parent was of foreign birth.[25] Does this mean that foreign-born parents, ill adjusted to American conditions of living, and handicapped by inability to speak English, lose authority over their daughters? Or does the fact point to a different moral code in the countries from which the parents emigrate?

Alcoholism and vicious moral conditions frequently exist in the homes from which unmarried mothers come. Kammerer cites instances in which father or mother or both were alcoholic, immoral, or criminalistic, exercising a vicious influence upon their daughters, and declares that in "many cases this constitutes a direct causative factor in their pregnancy." [26] In their study of "Illegitimacy as a Child Welfare Problem," Lundberg and Lenroot found that one or both parents of nearly one third of the 840 mothers of children born out of wedlock in Boston in 1914 were dead, divorced, separated, or not living in the United States. This means that 261 of the homes from which these unmarried mothers came were "broken homes," crippled in their primary task of rearing the young under wholesome conditions. Moreover, one or both parents of one eighth of the 840 unmarried mothers "were reported to be alcoholic, immoral, or otherwise of poor character." [27] Of 2,178 illegitimate children in the care of Boston agencies in 1914, it was reported that sixty-five had maternal grandparents (one or both) who "were insane or mentally below normal." The social histories of 408 of the 2,178 children (19 per cent) revealed "a heritage in which there was known to be insanity, feeble-mindedness, or other subnormal or abnormal mental conditions, or probably subnormality or feeble-mindedness. In 195 cases—9 per cent of the total reported—there was definite feeble-mindedness or insanity in the family history." [28]

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[22] Ann T. Bingham, "Determinants of Sex Delinquency in Girls," *Journal of the American Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology,* Vol. XIII, No. 4, February, 1923, p. 518.

[23] Ida R. Parker, *A Follow-Up Study of 500 Illegitimacy Applications.* (Research Bureau on Social Case Work, Boston, 1924), p. 21.

[24] Children's Bureau Publication No. 166, p. 13.

[25] Bingham, *op. cit.,* p. 505.

Further evidence that the parentage of many unmarried mothers is of such a character as to develop anti-social conduct in their children is furnished by Bingham.[29] Her investigations disclosed that alcoholism was common among the parents of the 500 sex delinquents in Waverley House. Both parents were alcoholic in nineteen cases; the father, in 159; the mother, in thirty-one; the brothers, in seventeen; and the sisters, in three cases. Sexual immorality existed in both parents in fourteen cases; in the father, in fifty-two; in the mother, in sixty. Thirty-seven of the fathers of these girls had criminal records, nine of the mothers, nineteen of the brothers and five of the sisters.

Healy and Bronner, in their extensive study of juvenile delinquents,[30] each took 1,000 cases of repeated offenders and investigated the homes. Their conclusion was as follows:

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[26] Kammerer, *op cit.*, p. 122.

[27] Lundberg and Lenroot, *op. cit.*, Part II, p. 49.

[28] *Ibid.*, p. 196.

[29] Bingham, *op. cit.*, p. 510.

[30] *Delinquents and Criminals: Their Making and Unmaking. Studies in Two American Cities* (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1926), p. 129. By permission.

> Specifically, if we ruled out the families in which there were such clearly unfortunate features of home life, poverty, great crowding, or very unsanitary surroundings, extreme parental neglect or extreme lack of parental control, excessive quarreling, alcoholism, obscenity, immorality or criminalism, mother away working, mentally diseased parent in the home, how many had we left? Enumerating the good homes thus by elimination, we found . . . the figures for Boston to be 10.3%, for Chicago 5%, numerically only a small difference. Among 2,000 young repeated offenders, then, there were living under reasonably good conditions for the upbringing of a child, only 7.6%.

When bad heredity and home conditions such as these furnish the background of life of young, impressionable girls from early childhood, the wonder is not that they go wrong, but that so many of them remain moral and self-respecting.

CARE AND PROTECTION AFFORDED UNMARRIED MOTHERS

Obviously, the burden and the shame of bringing into the world an illegitimate child, for whom there is no home, falls unequally upon the two parents. The father usually escapes unpenalized, while the mother, who must carry and bear the child, cannot evade the consequences of the social offense in which both were involved and in which, not rarely, the male was the chief offender. What facilities in the way of care, before and after confinement, does society furnish the unmarried mother? What help does it give her in securing employment and if possible, winning back her independence and self-respect?

Among the institutions and agencies in the United States that care for unmarried pregnant women, are (1) private maternity homes; (2) maternity hospitals, both private and municipal; (3) so-called "rescue homes," such as those founded by the Florence Crittenton League and the Salvation Army; (4) social agencies that render assistance to the unmarried mother and her child, such as children's aid societies, home-finding societies, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, and the like.

There can be little doubt that many of the private maternity homes in all of our large cities, managed as they are on a purely commercial basis, and avoiding publicity as much as possible, are "a distinct social menace." Mangold quotes certain of the advertisements inserted in the newspapers by these homes which show clearly enough that these institutions seek to serve unmarried mothers with as much secrecy as possible. The rates charged are "as high as the traffic will bear," but in some instances the mother is permitted to pay part of her expenses in work. Private maternity homes usually have little interest in the rehabilitation of the mother and are often quite willing to dispose of the child by adoption or placing in a home for a fee ranging from $15 to $50.[31] Indeed, it is probable that such institutions sometimes make a special effort to separate mother and child, and to this end discourage breast feeding. Moreover, there is evidence to show that very little care is exercised by some of these maternity homes, when placing babies in foster families, to discover the character of either the home or the future care-takers of the child. Gross neglect is shown in keeping track of babies thus disposed of, and mothers often lose all knowledge of their whereabouts. Adoption papers are rarely made out and filed by the less responsible managers of maternity homes, for their all-controlling desire is secrecy and avoidance of all connection with courts or legal processes.

It can hardly be doubted that babies thus separated from their mothers and "farmed out" to strangers, or placed in so-called "baby farms," die in appalling numbers; but unfortunately the public is not yet fully aroused to the need of more adequate inspection and regulation of commercial maternity homes and "baby farms." Mangold states that, after the Indiana Board of State Charities had been empowered to license and control maternity homes, it began an investigation which resulted in refusing licenses to many of these institutions and raising the standards of those permitted to continue.[32]

Confinement facilities for pregnant single women are also furnished by private and municipal hospitals which maintain maternity wards. Few of these institutions have adequate social service departments. Therefore not enough is done to supervise the unmarried mother after she leaves the hospital, to return her to her home and family, if they will receive her, or to find work that will enable her to support herself and baby and, if at all possible, to keep the child with her. Nor is much accomplished in the direction of reaching the putative fathers of illegitimate children and compelling them to render support and assistance to mother and child by court action.

The social agencies that deal with illegitimacy cases have until recently done little in the way of securing adequate records concerning unmarried mothers and their children. There can be no enlightened constructive program for dealing with this problem until far more complete data are secured. Nor can much be accomplished by social agencies to rehabilitate unhappy mothers who have borne children out of wedlock until our illegitimacy laws are thoroughly amended, and until society is willing to undertake the establishment of institutions where unmarried mothers may go, not only for immediate aid, but for such prolonged supervision and wise assistance as they may need in order to face the world once more with hope and serious purpose. "An important need, for successful work," says Mangold, "is a 'mothers' and babies' home,' a place where a woman can live and where her baby can be cared for while she is at work during the day. . . . Without such a home, the agencies have no propositions to make which a woman will consider, and, therefore, their reconstructive efforts collapse, with the frequent result that the woman returns in a year or two with a second illegitimate baby, or joins the ever present body of prostitutes in the city." [33]

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[31] See Mangold, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

[32] For this whole topic see Mangold, *op. cit.*, pp. 83–90.

THE CHILD BORN OUT OF WEDLOCK: HANDICAPS

Harsh and condemnatory as the traditional attitude of society to the unmarried mother has been, it has not been so crushing as the treatment meted out to the illegitimate child by its parents and by society. Few individuals, outside of social workers, fully realize the handicaps under which an illegitimate child begins its life struggle. With a heritage often gravely defective, borne under detrimental conditions of a mother worn by anxiety and fear of exposure, the child born out of wedlock is menaced by serious hazards to life and health. He is frequently deprived of a mother's care as well as of the care and support of his father; he is shifted about from place to place and from one type of care to another—both too often defective; finally he labors under hampering legal and social disadvantages. In most states, the illegitimate child can inherit from the mother, but not from the father; even if his paternity is established, as it infrequently is, he commonly receives no care and insufficient support from his father; his birth record discloses the fact of his illegitimate birth, if not specifically, yet by implication; and since this record is more often than not open to public inspection, it may be maliciously used against him; the circumstances of his birth may become known in school, or when he takes out his working papers, through the medium of his birth certificate. Add to these disabilities the cloud under which the child lives, the social stigma too often fixed upon him by the cruel and the thoughtless, and it will be appreciated that he is gravely handicapped from his birth.

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[33] Mangold, *op. cit.*, pp. 183–184.

Little is definitely known of the mental effect upon a sensitive child of the knowledge of his illegitimate birth. Lundberg and Lenroot state that the stories of several children who were public charges in Boston indicated mental suffering occasioned by ignorance or uncertainty in regard to the life histories or the whereabouts of their parents. They quote a few pitiful letters unveiling this distress. One boy of fourteen, who had not heard from his mother for thirteen years, during which time he had been under the care of the State, suddenly received a letter from her. His delight was touching and he wrote the following reply:

> I was very glad to hear from you. I was so surprised to hear from my mother I didn't know what to do. I didn't know I had a mother. Have I any father, sisters or brothers, aunts, uncles, cousins? I am well. I am almost 14. How old are you? I hope you are well the same as me. Write to me and tell me more about you—what you are doing. From your son.[34]

Infant Mortality among Illegitimate Children.

The unfavorable environmental conditions surrounding illegitimate children, especially the early separation from the mother of a large proportion of babies, is responsible for a shockingly high infant mortality among them. This is true in every country of the world where vital statistics are kept. Frequently, the deaths under one year of illegitimate infants are almost double in number those of legitimate children. A few statistics of European countries will make this plain.[35]

When we turn to the United States, we are confronted by the fact that no figures on comparative mortality rates of illegitimate children are available, either for the country as a whole or for the States. The backwardness of this country in securing vital statistics is striking in comparison with European nations. In 1920, the only published sources of information concerning mortality among illegitimate infants, so far as the Children's Bureau investigators could discover, were the figures for the Boston Health Department in 1915, similar data in reports of

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[34] Lundberg and Lenroot, *op. cit.,* Part II, p. 61.

[35] *Ibid.,* Part I, p. 28.

COUNTRY	ANNUAL AVERAGE NUMBER OF DEATHS UNDER ONE YEAR PER 1,000 LIVE BIRTHS		
	Illegitimate	*Legitimate*	*Ratio of Illegitimate to Legitimate Deaths*
Austria	247	188	1.3
Belgium	213	136	1.6
Denmark	167	90	1.9
England and Wales	208	104	2.0
Finland	175	106	1.7
France	221	111	2.0
German Empire	250	187	1.3
Italy	223	134	1.7
Norway	122	62	2.0
Scotland	223	120	1.9
Sweden	109	66	1.7
Switzerland	169	99	1.7
The Netherlands	233	102	2.3

the Newark, New Jersey, Health Department and the report of the Health Officer of the District of Columbia for 1912. In Boston, it was found that in 1914 the infant mortality rate among legitimate children was ninety-five per thousand, among illegitimate, 261 per thousand. In that year, therefore, the death rate of illegitimate babies in Boston was nearly three times greater than that of legitimate babies. This goes far beyond European disparities. In Baltimore, conditions were worse, for the infant mortality rate for illegitimate white children in 1915 was 3.3 times that for legitimate infants. The Health Officer of the District of Columbia reported that the infant mortality of legitimate children in the District in 1912 was 79.7 per thousand, whereas the rate for illegitimate infants was 302.7—almost four times as great! [36] Mangold cites figures for Cincinnati in 1912 which show an illegitimate infant mortality of 20.9 per cent (209 per thousand), compared to 10.3 per cent in the case of legitimate babies.[37]

Marked improvement has more recently taken place in these and other cities, where records are kept of infant mortality among illegitimate babies. Legislation in Maryland and North and South Carolina "has placed legal sanction upon the policy of requiring mothers and babies to remain together during the nursing period." Public sentiment was aroused in Maryland by a study made by the State vice commission in 1914 revealing the high mortality among infants cared for in institutions apart from their mothers. In 1916 a statute was enacted providing that no child under six months of age may be separated from his mother for placement in an institution or foster home without fulfilling one of the following conditions: (1) Certification by two qualified physicians; (2) an order for separation by a court of competent jurisdiction; (3) written consent to separation by the Board of State Aid and Charities. The statutes in North and South Carolina are similar in tenor. In order to ascertain the effect of the Maryland law upon mortality among infants born out of wedlock the United States Children's Bureau investigated conditions in Baltimore in 1921. Six years previously approximately one in every three illegitimate infants died before the age of one year and one in four before the age of six months. Of the babies born in 1921, however, only one in eight died before his first birthday and only one in twelve before the age of six months. "Mortality among infants born out of wedlock was reduced more than 50 per cent between 1915 and 1921, and the rate for infants of legitimate birth was reduced less than 20 per cent." [38] Here is important evidence to the effect that the widespread custom of separation of very young infants born out of marriage from their mothers is a serious factor in their excessively high mortality. In Milwaukee, where in 1916-1917 infant mortality of illegitimate babies reached 236.8, or 2.3 times the rate for children of legitimate birth, a program for keeping mothers and babies together during a three-months' nursing period was put into effect in 1919. A study of illegitimacy covering the year ended September 30, 1917, had shown that more than half the infants included in the investigation had been separated from their mothers at a very early age. After the program had been in operation for two years the executive secretary of the Juvenile Protective Association commented on its effects as follows:

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[36] Lundberg and Lenroot, *op. cit.,* Part I, p. 35.

[37] *Ibid.,* p. 119.

> The results of these measures have been gratifying and far-reaching. The child-placing organizations and the doctors and other individuals who formerly brought many babies a few days old into the city to be placed for adoption, are now required to have permits to board them until they are placed with

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[38] Emma O. Lundberg, "Children of Illegitimate Birth and Measures for their Protection," pp. 8, 9. United States Children's Bureau Publication No. 166 (Washington, 1926).

adoptive parents. Commercial lying-in hospitals and maternity homes, which formerly permitted mothers to leave when their babies were only 10 days or 2 weeks old, without any effort at breast feeding, must now apply for a permit to keep the baby without the mother. This requirement gives an opportunity for a social investigation and for finding a way to keep the mother and baby together, in the city or elsewhere, during the three months' nursing period.[39]

PROVISIONS FOR CARE AND PROTECTION OF ILLEGITIMATE CHILDREN

A large proportion of illegitimate children are cared for by private agencies or become charges of the State or the city. In our times, the foundling hospitals keep children only until homes can be found for them. If children are in poor physical condition when received into foundling hospitals, they are cared for until they are well before being boarded out. In addition to these institutions are orphanages for dependent children, which sometimes receive illegitimate children, keep them for a while and then find homes for them. For some years past there has been developing a powerful trend in the United States in the direction of supplying family care for children who have been deprived of their homes or who have never known home life. Numerous societies have been formed with this end in view. Some of these place children only in free homes, where there is a chance of their being legally adopted. Other agencies pay stipulated sums for the care of dependent illegitimate children in boarding homes. Most readers will agree that this movement is in the best interests of children, who are known to pine and die under a régime of institutional life. Yet there are serious hazards involved in placing children in homes unless there is regular public supervision of these places, and of the children themselves over a period of years.

In the United States, with the exception of Minnesota, the supervision of the State over illegitimate children appears to be merely incidental to State control of agencies or institutions caring for dependent or delinquent children. In many States, although not in all, organizations which care for or place out children in homes are subject to State supervision, as are the homes themselves. But the United States has very little that is comparable to the systems of public guardianship organized in certain European countries.

[39] Lundberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 9, 10.

LEGAL AID TO UNMARRIED MOTHERS: PUBLIC GUARDIANSHIP OF ILLEGITIMATE CHILDREN

As stated above, most American commonwealths have enacted laws to enforce support of the illegitimate child by the father, if paternity is established by a court trial. The law usually provides that the mother shall institute proceedings against the putative father of her child, but many States also authorize the poor-law authorities to act, or any agencies that would be charged with the support of the child. Apparently, few actions are brought against putative fathers, and fewer still are vigorously pressed. In 550 cases of illegitimacy investigated by Parker, information was secured about 384 men, 70.4 per cent of the total number of fathers. Of this number, 127 had been prosecuted—33 per cent of those about whom information was given, or 23.3 per cent of all fathers. "In most instances," says Parker, "an agency had assisted the mother in the prosecution." Out of the 127 cases, twelve men were found not guilty, the cases against three others were dismissed because not prosecuted, thirteen cases were pending and seven were not reported. This left ninety-two men who were adjudged fathers of illegitimate children, and were compelled by the court to pay sums for their support ranging from $2.50 to $12 per week. Frequently the court order included the expenses for confinement. It is significant that 257 putative fathers—67 per cent of the 384 about whom information was secured —were not prosecuted. In explanation it may be said that nearly one third of these men were not located. In seventy-three instances, the mother or her relatives were opposed to prosecution for fear of publicity. Several women disappeared before prosecution could be begun.[40]

Similar conditions with respect to the prosecution of putative fathers were disclosed by Lundberg and Lenroot in their analysis of the results of the Massachusetts law of 1913, making the father of an illegitimate child liable for reasonable contributions to its support during minority. In 1914, the number of cases initiated under the act was 256—less than one third of the illegitimacy cases for that year. At the close of 1915, less than half the cases had resulted in a legal arrangement for support of the child or for confinement expenses or both, by which a man could be held to his obligation. Moreover, the money collected was as a rule less in amount than that required for the support of dependent children who are wards of the State.[41]

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[40] Parker, *A Follow-Up Study of 550 Illegitimacy Applications,* pp. 40–41 (Research Bureau on Social Case Work, Boston, 1924).

Minnesota Child Welfare Laws.

It seems from the evidence at hand that the proper authorities are not sufficiently active in themselves initiating proceedings against putative fathers or in bringing steady pressure to bear upon unmarried mothers to prosecute. The conditions suggest that the whole responsibility might well be centered in a State authority, whose primary duty it should be to protect illegitimate children and secure for them the full measure of support, education, and general welfare for which the law makes provision. The Minnesota child welfare laws, enacted in 1917, are the most liberal and enlightened in the entire country in their provisions for safeguarding the rights and well-being of illegitimate children. The statutes (Ch. 194, sec. 2) provide:

> It shall be the duty of the board of control when notified of a woman who is delivered of an illegitimate child, or pregnant with child likely to be illegitimate when born, to take care that the interests of the child are safeguarded, that appropriate steps are taken to establish his paternity, and that there is secured for him the nearest approximation to the care, support and education that he would be entitled to if born of lawful marriage. For the better accomplishment of these purposes the board may initiate such legal or other action as is deemed necessary; may make such provision for the care, maintenance and education of the child as the best interests of the child may from time to time require, and may offer its aid and protection in such ways as are found wise and expedient to the unmarried woman approaching motherhood.

In this law may be seen the first example in our country of the public guardianship of illegitimate children that has long existed in many cities of Germany and in the Scandinavian countries.[42]

Probably the most progressive feature of the Minnesota laws is the act providing that large powers of guardianship shall be conferred on the Minnesota State Board of Control. Under the terms of this act, not only dependent, defective, and delinquent but also illegitimate children may be committed to the Board by the courts. The Board may make such disposition as seems best for each child, except that it may not place a child in an institution for delinquents who has not been adjudged a delinquent by the proper authorities. The wisdom of such a provision for public guardianship of illegitimate children becomes apparent when it is realized that such children are often in need of the protection of the State because the mother has deserted them or is an unfit person to care for them. Where the mother herself is a young girl with a wretched home environment, in which she cannot be left without harm, the Minnesota statute makes it possible for her also to be committed to the Board of Control and removed from the debasing surroundings in which her mistake was made.

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[41] "Illegitimacy as a Child Welfare Problem," Part II, pp. 47–48. *Bureau Publications,* No. 66, 1920, United States Children's Bureau.

[42] See "Illegitimacy as a Child Welfare Problem," Part I, pp. 50–52.

An interesting feature of the law consists in the fact that these public guardianship powers are an example of centralized responsibility and decentralized administration. Although the State Board of Control is held accountable for 1,000 or more illegitimate children born every year in Minnesota, each of the counties in the State is expected to care for the illegitimate children within its own confines. Before any action is taken by the State Board, the county commissioners must take formal action requesting the Board to appoint a child welfare board within the county. Individuals or agencies who see the need for child welfare work frequently bring pressure to bear on the commissioners to pass such a formal resolution. The funds for financing the work of the child welfare boards come from the counties themselves.

Under stimulus from the child welfare board, if necessary, the mother brings complaint against the putative father before a justice of the peace, and a warrant is issued which may be executed anywhere in the State. A preliminary hearing is held and, if the evidence indicates the guilt of the supposititious father, the judge binds him over under security of from $300 to $1,000 for trial in the district court. If the man is adjudged the father of the child, judgment may be entered against him on behalf of the county for the confinement expenses of the mother, the support of the child up to the time of judgment (if the expense has been borne by the county) and the costs of prosecution. If the man fails to pay, he may be jailed for ninety days, after which he may be discharged if he proves that he has no property. Finally, an order for support of the child is made by the judge, requiring monthly payments of amounts varying from $10 to $25. The usual amount demanded is $15 a month. Unfortunately, in Minnesota as in other States, actions for establishment of paternity lag far behind the number of illegitimate births. In 1921, only 33 per cent of the total cases were prosecuted.

The procedure does not differ greatly from that prevailing in other States. But with respect to the guardianship of the child after judgment, the Minnesota law is unique. The State Board of Control discourages the appointment of the mother or a relative as guardian, since, if a lump-sum settlement of his financial obligations is permitted the father by the court, the money paid over may not be expended for the child. "The procedure permitted by law and urged by the State Board of Control is to make the board the guardian of the child, or to order that the money be paid to the local child welfare board, leaving it to the latter to advise the mother regarding the expenditure." [43]

Minnesota makes abandonment of a minor child a felony punishable by five years' imprisonment. As soon as a man is adjudged father of an illegitimate child, the provisions of the abandonment law become applicable to him. Moreover, a special statute provides that if a putative father of an illegitimate child leaves the State during the pregnancy of the mother or within sixty days after the birth of a living child, provided that he left "with intent to evade proceedings to establish paternity," he is adjudged a felon and may be imprisoned two years. The weakness of this law obviously consists in the fact that, since paternity of an illegitimate child is not itself a felony, it is a difficult matter to prove that the man left the State to evade illegitimacy proceedings, and not on lawful business.

This brief exposition of the Minnesota laws of 1917 should serve to make clear that this State is the first in the Union to assume public responsibility and guardianship of children born out of wedlock and even of very young mothers, to the end of reducing to a minimum the hardships of the illegitimate child and of diminishing the ever increasing expense for delinquents and dependents that every State is forced to carry. In the words of a recent investigator:

> The assumption by the State of responsibility for the welfare of illegitimate children has a sound economic basis. Each year in Minnesota 1,000 or more children are born out of wedlock. Handicapped from the start by being deprived of normal home life, this group in succeeding years adds thousands of individuals to the already heavy burden of dependents maintained by the State. The fact that a remedy has not been sought earlier is doubtless due to

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[43] Mildred D. Mudgett, "Results of Minnesota's Laws for Protection of Children Born out of Wedlock," *Children's Bureau Publications,* No. 128, Part III, p. 187.

the close association of the problem with a double standard of morals and a traditional reluctance to discuss sex problems.[44]

It is the considered judgment of an increasing body of social workers and students of illegitimacy that the lead of Minnesota in surrounding the illegitimate child with that protection which apparently only a specially constituted public board can give should be followed by the remaining States of the American Union.

THE BURDEN CARRIED BY SOCIETY

By this time the reader will have gained some conception of the heavy burden carried by the public with respect to illegitimacy. In a large majority of cases, a child born out of wedlock, with no home to receive him, becomes a public charge because his mother is unable or unfit to care for him and his father was not prosecuted and compelled to furnish at least part of the support of the child he thoughtlessly brought into the world. The obligations not assumed by the parents must be taken up by the public if the child is not to be left to die. Consequently, society carries a heavy load of responsibility and expense for maternity and infancy care, and later for child dependency. In the majority of cases, all or part of the expenses for confinement and after care of mother and child are borne by private and public agencies; and a by no means negligible proportion of child dependents are of illegitimate birth.

This, however, is not all the public burden entailed by illegitimacy. The Children's Bureau study of illegitimacy in Boston and Massachusetts refers to the restlessness, the morbid outlook on life or the antisocial conduct of many children born out of wedlock. A comparison of dependent children of legitimate and illegitimate birth, fourteen years old and over, who were under State care, showed that 28 per cent of the illegitimate children were troublesome, as compared with 16 per cent of the legitimate children. Furthermore, a study of delinquent children in State institutions in Massachusetts indicated that the proportion of illegitimate children in these reformatory schools is high when compared with the percentage of illegitimate births in the State. In partial explanation of this disproportion, the investigators state that, although the figures were too small to justify positive conclusions, "the findings suggest that children handicapped by birth out of wedlock, and therefore frequently deprived of care by their own parents, are turned over to the care of correctional institutions at an earlier age and for less serious offenses than children whose home ties are more nearly normal." [45]

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[44] Mudgett, *op. cit.*, pp. 183–184.

The expense entailed in caring for children born out of wedlock is no inconsiderable item of a city's budget. It is estimated, on the basis of agency reports and those of the Massachusetts Board of Charity, that Boston spent more than $123,500 for its care of illegitimate children in 1914.[46] The appropriation for maintenance of the Minnesota Children's Bureau was, in 1921–1922, $35,000—an inadequate amount when the importance and extent of the work is considered. Minnesota, however, is a farming State which, like the rest of the Middle West, is struggling in the trough of prolonged agricultural depression. Moreover, it should be kept in mind that this appropriation is but a drop in the bucket in the total costs of illegitimacy borne by county welfare boards and private social agencies throughout Minnesota. In no single State of the Union are figures available for estimating the expenditures involved in caring for unmarried mothers and illegitimate children, but they must mount into enormous sums over a period of years.

PROPOSALS FOR REFORM IN LEGISLATION AND ADMINISTRATION

It is encouraging to note the pronounced tendency in the United States, during the past decade, toward making the child the central figure in the social problem of illegitimacy and in safeguarding his interests. But in every country much remains to be done before the illegitimate child is secured opportunities for survival, for normal development, for even moderately happy childhood, for education and preparation for life work at all equal to those enjoyed by children born in wedlock. Society as a whole still tends to apply with more or less literalness the grim saying of the Hebrew Decalogue that "the sins of the fathers shall be visited upon the children even unto the third and fourth generation."

Numerous proposals for reform of illegitimacy laws, and of the work of social agencies dealing with illegitimate mothers and their children, have been made in recent years. It is possible to touch only very briefly upon a few of these. Mangold suggests a program for prevention of illegitimacy[47] by controlling the mentally and morally unfit. The United States has, as yet, by no means seriously grappled with the problems of its appalling army of defectives—men, women and minor children. It is estimated that two thirds of them are at large to propagate their kind. Not only are these unfortunates weak in inhibition, and lacking in foresight of consequences, but they are almost incapable, at least in the lower levels, of *learning from experience*—the distinguishing mark of the intelligent individual. It is idle to talk of giving moral training to genuine defectives, while they are left at the mercy of environmental influences that tempt to irregular sex relations. Mangold holds that the social hazards of allowing feeble-minded persons at large (especially women, who are the easy prey of men of all social stations) are so great that every State should promptly take steps to segregate these persons and provide facilities for their employment under wholesome and, so far as possible, happy conditions. He believes that the enormous cost to the State involved in a program of public care of thousands of feeble-minded girls and women can be greatly reduced by making "colonies" of feeble-minded persons self-supporting. In time such a thoroughgoing measure of prevention will, he believes, greatly reduce the public burden of illegitimacy, delinquency, poverty, and crime.

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[45] Lundberg and Lenroot, *op. cit.*, Part II, pp. 65–66.

[46] *Ibid.*, Part II, p. 153.

The second type of individual which Mangold would have segregated at public charge, or rendered harmless by sterilization, are so-called sex perverts of both sexes. These are the highly sexed men and (occasionally) women who are guilty of serious and continued sex offenses, and appear to be sexually irresponsible. Several States have already made provision for the sterilization of male sex perverts[48] but, as Mangold points out, public opinion is not sufficiently enlightened to support vigorously the enforcement of these laws.

The resolutions adopted by the New York Regional Conference on Illegitimacy, held in 1920, represent pretty clearly the state of progressive opinion at present in regard to public care and protection of illegitimate children. A few of the resolutions may profitably be summarized.[49] The Conference went on record as favoring the creation of

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[47] Mangold, *op. cit.*, pp. 184–188.

[48] By means of a harmless operation.

[49] "Standards of Legal Protection for Children Born Out of Wedlock," pp. 17–19, *Bureau Publications*, No. 77, United States Children's Bureau.

State departments responsible for child welfare, "which should include among their duties the assisting of unmarried mothers and of children born out of wedlock." However, it was the sense of the conference that "State guardianship should be exercised only over those children who are neglected or dependent or in danger of becoming dependent." Clearly, public sentiment in this country is not yet ready to sponsor the "public guardian" of illegitimate children provided for in the laws of Sweden and Germany. "The State should license and supervise private hospitals which receive unmarried mothers for confinement and all private child-helping and child-placing agencies, to the end that unfit hospitals and agencies may be sufficiently improved or eliminated." The registration of all births should be compulsory, but the father's name should be recorded on the birth certificate only if paternity has been established. All records of births out of wedlock should be confidential, open to inspection only upon court order. The names of parents should be omitted from all transcripts for school and employment purposes.

"The mother should be persuaded, by case work, to start proceedings (against the father) whenever possible. *Otherwise the State department above mentioned should assume this responsibility.*" When paternity has been adjudicated, the father should be obligated to support an illegitimate child *in the same manner as a legitimate child*. The States should enact uniform laws making desertion of an illegitimate child an offense as serious as abandonment of a legitimate child, *and such offenses should be "readily extraditable."* The jurisdiction of the court with respect to custody and support of the child should continue *during minority*. "After an adjudication of paternity or an acknowledgment in writing by the father, the child born out of wedlock should have the *same rights of inheritance* as the child born in wedlock." After paternity is established, the "child's right to the name of the father should be permissive. . . . The mother should be persuaded, by good case work, to keep her child at least during the nursing period whenever possible. When necessary, steps should be taken to secure for mother and child the benefits of the so-called mothers' pension acts." [50]

NEED FOR A PROGRAM OF PREVENTION

A careful consideration of the proposals outlined above will convince the reader that they are purely remedial measures, designed to alleviate a bad social situation after it has developed. If society is not forever to carry the burden of illegitimacy on its shoulders, it behooves its leaders to work out a program that goes to the source of the evil and seeks to eliminate so far as may be the social causes of illegitimacy. Paramount among these will be found poverty and ignorance, and the ills that go hand in hand with these—overcrowding, bad housing, and degraded family life. What can be done to secure for every worker a decent living wage, and, if he is married, such "family wages" as will be of vital assistance in rearing his children in decent comfort? This is the crucial question to which social workers, in their fight to remedy grave social evils, return again and again.

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[50] Italics mine.

But the attack upon poverty and bad housing is not enough. There must be a recognition on the part of the public of its responsibility for providing better facilities for recreation for the youth of our towns and cities. All wholesome forms of recreation, outdoor and indoor, including dancing, should be provided in sufficient amount to meet the needs of youth thirsting for pleasure and fullness of life. A comprehensive plan for recreation should be worked out and put into operation in crowded industrial centers, *under careful public supervision.* It will prove an excellent social investment in the end, although it will entail large expense in the beginning.

Another preventive measure consists in public supervision of employment agencies for girls and also of such employments as those of waitresses and chambermaids in hotels, of girls in department stores and offices, of domestic servants. It has been abundantly proved that these occupations, especially those of hotel, café, and domestic workers, are peculiarly hazardous for young girls and furnish an unduly large proportion of illegitimate mothers and prostitutes. Shall society continue to sidestep its manifest responsibility to safeguard the employments that have been proved to be demoralizing to girls?

The schools likewise have their part to play by discovering feebleminded children of the lower levels and making possible their segregation, at least after puberty, a policy which it would seem wise for every State to adopt. Nor does the responsibility of the school stop here. A thoughtful, well-planned program of sex instruction, in connection with regular school studies and with the coöperation of parents, should be worked out in every public school system—urban and rural. It is not an idle dream to believe that youth can be educated to greater respect for sex functions if they are given clearer understanding and idealistic appreciation of the part these functions play in personal and social life. The most gifted teachers, combining with the best scientific training a dynamic idealism and sympathetic comprehension of the problems and stresses of adolescent youth, are the only individuals who should be allowed to undertake this sex instruction. For upon it hangs, in no small degree, the issue of enlightened sex control on the part of the public in general.

TOPICS FOR REPORTS

1. Analyze and criticize in detail the Minnesota Laws for the protection of illegitimate children.
   Mildred D. Mudgett, "Results of Minnesota's Laws for Protection of Children Born Out of Wedlock," *Bureau Publications,* No. 128 ("Illegitimacy as a Child Welfare Problem"), Part III, United States Children's Bureau.
2. A Study of the Family Conditions, Physical and Mental Status and Marriage of Delinquents.
   William Healy, M.D., and Augusta F. Bronner, *Delinquents and Criminals: Their Making and Unmaking* (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1926), pp. 103–163, 179–182.
3. Make a Comparative Study of the Illegitimacy Laws of the Various States in the Union. Set up your own standards of evaluation.
   "Analysis and Tabular Summary of State Laws Relating to Illegitimacy in the United States. . . ." United States Department of Labor, Children's Bureau, Chart No. 16 (Washington, 1929).
4. What outstanding ideas have you gained from reading "Children of Illegitimate Birth whose Mothers Have Kept their Custody," pp. 8–101. Children's Bureau, Publication No. 190 (Washington, 1928).

ADDITIONAL SELECTED READINGS

1. Mabel H. Mattingly, *The Unmarried Mother and Her Child* (Western Reserve University, Cleveland, 1928).
2. P. G. Kammerer, *The Unmarried Mother, A Study of Five Hundred Cases* (Little, Brown and Company, Boston, 1918), pp. 265–283.
3. Ida R. Parker, *A Follow-Up Study of 550 Illegitimacy Applications* (Research Bureau on Social Case Work, Boston, 1924).

CHAPTER XVII

THE QUESTION OF DIVORCE

INCREASE OF DIVORCE: DIVORCE STATISTICS

OF the many twentieth-century problems relating to marriage and the family, none has so disturbed socially minded men and women and provoked such vigorous controversies as has the question of our ever-increasing divorce rate. The two earliest government reports on marriage and divorce, the first issued by Hon. Carroll D. Wright, Commissioner of Labor, in 1889, and the second by the Bureau of the Census in 1908–1909, cover the forty-year period from 1867 to 1906 inclusive. In 1914, the International Committee on Marriage and Divorce wrote the Director of the Census urging the collection of more recent statistics because of the growing demand for an amendment to the federal constitution conferring on Congress the power to legislate on all questions of marriage and divorce—a power which now resides in the States. In 1917, the House of Representatives appropriated a sum for the collection of statistics in this field, and the Census Bureau decided to use this appropriation to secure the figures on marriage and divorce for the year 1916 and for each year thereafter. The report for 1916 was published in 1919, and since that time census reports have been issued annually for the years 1922–1932 inclusive. There is available for the student of divorce statistics, then, a long record covering forty years (1867–1906) together with thirteen annual reports published between 1919 and 1932.

A study of the earlier reports reveals a continuous, almost unbroken augmentation in divorces for the period 1867 to 1906. The total number of divorces in 1867 was 9,937 while in 1906 at the end of the period, divorces had risen to 72,062, an increase of more than 625 per cent. The report for 1916 shows no diminution in the rise of the tide of divorce. The number of divorces granted in that year was 112,036, an increase of 55 per cent over 1906.[1] In 1932, the most recent year for which statistics are available, the number of divorces had risen to 160,338, an increase of 52 per cent in sixteen years. In the sixty-six year period from 1867 to 1932 divorces have increased over 1,514 per cent or, to put it in another way, there were considerably more than fifteen times as many divorce decrees granted in 1932 as were granted in 1867.

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[1] Census *Report* for 1916, p. 13.

More important is the fact that the increase in divorces has far outstripped the population increase. J. P. Lichtenberger [2] has reckoned the comparative percentage increases in divorce and in annual average population for five-year periods from 1870 to 1905. The figures follow: [3]

YEAR	PERCENTAGE INCREASE IN DIVORCE	PERCENTAGE INCREASE IN POPULATION
1905	22.1	8.7
1900	36.7	9.4
1895	22.3	10.4
1890	34.8	11.3
1885	28.6	12.8
1880	33.2	13.1
1875	28.2	15.0
1870	...	...

Thus it appears that, in the five-year periods under consideration, the percentage of divorce increased between two and four times as much as the percentage of population, varying with the period. In 1905, the population was slightly more than double that of 1870 while divorces were six times as numerous. In the years from 1922 to 1930 the population grew 12.8 per cent while divorces increased nearly 30 per cent. The census report of 1916 gives us the divorce rates per 100,000 of the population for the ten-year periods from 1890 to 1916. Beginning with a rate of fifty-three divorces to every 100,000 of population in 1890, the rate rose to seventy-three in 1900, to eighty-four in 1906 and to 112 in 1916.[4] In 1932, a year in which there was a notable fall in the number of divorces due to the depression, the divorces per 100,000 of the population had risen to 128.

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[2] *Divorce: A Study in Social Causation* (Longmans, Green & Co., New York, 1909), p. 68.

[3] The percentage of increase both for divorce and for population represents the average for the five-year period of which the year given is the median year, except that for 1905, which is the average of the four years 1903 to 1906 inclusive.

[4] Census *Report* for 1916, p. 14.

If divorces are considered in relation to the *married population* only —a somewhat more refined method—the following table shows the ratios over a period of ten years:

YEAR	NUMBER OF DIVORCES PER 100,000 OF THE ESTIMATED MARRIED POPULATION [5]
1922	330
1923	360
1924	373
1925	372
1926	378
1927	397
1928	399
1929	405
1930	364
1931	346

On scanning the table the reader will observe a continuous increase in the ratio of divorces from 1922 through 1929. The sharp decrease in the succeeding two years is of course due to the financial and economic breakdown.

Another method of computing divorces is the estimate of the divorces per 100 marriages of a given year. The table on page 392 based on census reports gives these rates over a period of seventeen years. It will be noted that the rate continuously rises save in the years 1917, a war year, 1922, a depression year, 1929 and 1932, also years of economic slump when the full force of abnormal conditions was generally felt.

Students of the divorce question are often interested in predicting the probability of a marriage in a given year ending in divorce. A refined method of computing this probability has been worked out by Cahen.[6] The method is too complicated to be detailed here and, moreover, census data are incomplete prior to the World War, so that Cahen's method is applicable only to the years from 1922 on. By a lengthy and re-

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[5] Owing to the fact that the members of the married population of the United States are based on estimates from year to year the figures in this table are only approximately correct.

[6] Alfred Cahen, *Statistical Analysis of American Divorce,* (Columbia University Press, New York, 1932).

YEAR OF DIVORCE	DIVORCES PER 100 MARRIAGES OF THE GIVEN YEAR
1916	10.6
1917	10.6
1918	11.6
1919	12.3
1920	13.4
1921	13.7
1922	13.1
1923	13.4
1924	14.4
1925	14.8
1926	15.0
1927	16.0
1928	16.6
1929	16.3
1930	17.0
1931	17.2
1932	16.3

fined procedure,[7] which allows for annulments, divorces granted in foreign lands, and divorces granted in the United States to foreign-born nationals married abroad, Cahen estimates that the probability of an American marriage in the year 1928 ending in divorce was 17.92 or nearly 18 per cent. In other words, his calculations show that in all probability almost 18 out of every 100 marriages contracted in 1928 will be dissolved in a divorce court.

Divorce in Geographic Divisions and States.

In certain sections of the United States divorce rates are much higher than in other divisions. The Mountain States—Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, and Nevada—had in 1932 the highest rates of increase per thousand of the population over the preceding year. The table on page 393 gives the rates by divisions for that year.

A study of the table will show that the highest increases were in the far West and Southwest and the lowest in the two Northeastern divisions, where the increment of divorce was less than unity for every thousand persons. Of course it must be kept in mind that 1932 was a

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[7] See Cahen, *op. cit.*, pp. 116–119.

GEOGRAPHICAL DIVISIONS	RATE OF INCREASE IN 1932 OVER 1931 PER 1,000 OF THE POPULATION
Mountain	2.95
Pacific	2.26
West South Central	2.05
East North Central	1.53
West North Central	1.45
East South Central	1.22
New England	0.92
Middle Atlantic	.50

year when the United States was in the deepest trough of the economic depression; therefore, the rates of increase were relatively small in all divisions. Divorce actions involve heavy expense and notoriously decrease in periods of business and industrial breakdown.

The ratio of divorces to marriages is highest, as might be expected, in the State of Nevada, where the law requires only six weeks' residence in the State before an action for divorce is brought.[8] For this reason, hundreds of discontented partners, living in New York and other States where the legal causes of divorce are limited, take up their residence for forty-five days in Nevada and then bring suit for divorce. In consequence, the divorces granted in Nevada are not far from one half as numerous as the marriages. In 1929 the marriages celebrated in Nevada numbered 5,733 and the divorces granted were 2,533—or 44 per cent of the marriages. In 1928 divorces were 62 per cent as numerous as marriages. The depression struck a heavy blow at Nevada's notorious "divorce business" which declined from 5,260 in 1931 to 3,989 in 1932—a loss of more than 22 per cent.

AN ANALYSIS OF DIVORCE STATISTICS

Divorces Granted the Wife.

A study of the latest census report reveals some interesting facts. For many years, about two thirds of the divorce decrees in the country have been granted to women. In 1924, the percentage of divorces granted to the husband was 31.5; and to the wife, 68.5. Apparently the proportion of decrees in favor of the wife as plaintiff is increasing. In

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[8] By a law of May 1, 1931.

1927 the relative percentages were 29 and 71, while in 1932 they were 26.5 and 73.5. This steady increment in the proportion of divorce actions brought by the wife probably indicates a growing unwillingness on the part of women to submit to conditions in the marital relation which once they tolerated or shrank from ending by means of the painful publicity of the divorce court.

Causes of Divorce.

The census report for 1932 analyzes the total number of divorces with respect to the causes for which they were granted, and the percentage of decrees granted to husband and wife for each cause. The figures follow:

CAUSE	TOTAL DIVORCES		GRANTED TO HUSBAND		GRANTED TO WIFE	
	Number	*Per cent Distrib.*	*Number*	*Per cent Distrib.*	*Number*	*Per cent Distrib.*
All causes	159,710	100.0	42,335	100.0	117,375	100.0
Adultery	11,605	7.3	4,210	9.9	7,395	6.3
Cruelty	68,246	42.7	15,174	35.8	53,072	45.2
Desertion	44,605	27.9	17,884	42.2	26,721	22.8
Drunkenness	2,178	1.4	143	0.3	2,035	1.7
Neglect to provide	6,620	4.1			6,620	5.6
Combinations of preceding causes [9]	12,713	8.0	1,687	3.9	11,026	9.3
Minor causes [9]	12,607	7.9	2,863	6.7	9,744	8.1

A critical study of these figures will prove rewarding. First it should be noted that the two outstanding causes of divorce are cruelty and desertion. Adultery—the one cause which most religious denominations in this country recognize as valid—ranks third among the important legal grounds brought forward in the divorce court. But it is probable that adultery is more often the basic cause of divorce than appears in the figures. Women, and in some instances men also, prefer to bring charges of cruelty or desertion rather than adultery, if such charges have a chance of securing a decree in favor of the plaintiff. Therefore social investigators are agreed that the figures with respect to divorces granted for adultery do not reveal the true conditions. Another noteworthy fact is that the percentage of divorces granted the wife for cruelty is higher than the percentage granted the husband, whereas the reverse is true with respect to desertion. It is rather surprising to learn that 17,884 divorces were granted to husbands in 1932 for the desertion of their wives.

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[9] Totals calculated from detailed figures in census report for 1932, p. 4.

Since 12,713 divorces were granted in 1932 for so-called "minor causes," these merit detailed consideration. Only the more important causes are listed below:

Cause	Number	Cause	Number
Gross neglect of duty	8,887	Misconduct	209
Separation	830	Impotency	89
Vagrancy (mostly non-support)	491	Fraudulent representation	106
		Incompatibility	294
Conviction of crime	1,251	Insanity	144
Bigamy	141	Cause not reported	1,136

A glance at the figures shows that the most important cause for divorce in this group is "gross neglect of duty." Obviously this is a general term including diverse causes of complaint. It is interesting to note that only 294 decrees were granted for incompatibility; yet it can hardly be doubted that this is one of the chief determining causes of the flood of divorce cases in our courts. Incompatibility probably lies at the root of a large proportion of divorces granted for "cruelty," which is a blanket term covering many forms of physical and mental suffering inflicted by one mate upon the other. Insanity, strangely enough, is recognized in only a few States as legal ground for divorce. Hence only 144 divorces were granted in 1932 for this cause and nearly 80 per cent of these were conferred on the husband.

Contested and Uncontested Divorces.

When the student of divorce statistics turns to the section of the census dealing with the divorces contested or uncontested, he is rather startled to learn that only 13.9 per cent of the total number of divorces granted in 1931 were contested.[10] Of the 49,951 divorces granted the husband as plaintiff, 85 per cent were not contested; and of the 132,612 divorces granted the wife, 84.6 per cent were uncontested. This would appear to mean one of two things: either that the defendant has too poor a case to contest the action of the plaintiff, or that both husband and wife desire release from a rasping bond. If we had exact knowledge of the extent to which the latter motive operates to prevent husband or wife from even attempting a defense in a divorce action, we might gain a clearer realization of the fact that marital unhappiness is commonly mutual—not one-sided.

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[10] *Report* for 1931, pp. 25, 26. Figures not given in 1932.

Divorces According to the Duration of Marriage.

Another suggestive analysis made by the Bureau of the Census consists in classifying the divorces granted according to the duration of the marriage. In 1932, 3.9 per cent of divorces were granted to couples who had been married *less than one year.* If we add to this the percentage of divorces granted to those whose marriage had endured one year, the percentage rises to 10.9. This figure represents a marked increase over the average percentages for the periods 1867 to 1886 and 1887 to 1906, which are respectively 5.1 and 5.2. Apparently, divorces granted in cases where the duration of marriage is one year or less are twice as numerous now as twenty-five or thirty years ago. Of the total divorces in 1932, 35.7 per cent were granted to persons who had been married *less than five years;* whereas only 10.1 per cent were granted to the entire group of persons whose marriage had lasted twenty years to "30 years and over." Obviously, the first five years of married life represent the most critical period, when adjustment and compromise are most difficult. The percentage of divorces granted in each year thereafter falls steadily, until in the period "30 years and over" it is only 2.1.

Divorces According to Number of Children.

The classification of divorces according to whether or not children were reported as affected by the decree yields some interesting results. In 1932 considerably more than half the divorces (55.4 per cent) were granted to spouses without children! This is one more bit of evidence of a declining birth rate. It is significant that children were reported much more frequently in cases where the divorce was granted to the wife than in cases where the husband received the decree. In 41.3 per cent of the cases where the divorce was granted to the wife, children were reported; whereas in only 29.6 per cent of the cases where the husband received the decree were children reported. It is probable that a man with children would be less likely than a woman to seek a divorce since he would have more difficulty in caring for young children than a mother would. Then, too, except in those instances where the mother is manifestly an unfit guardian, the court usually assigns children to the wife. In 1931, children were assigned to the mother in 78.8 per cent of the cases reporting children. Consequently the father may well be more reluctant than the mother to bring an action for divorce which might cost him the society of his children. In view of the popular belief that the existence of children strongly tends to make marriage more permanent, it is a striking fact that 41.1 per cent of the divorces granted to the wife in 1931 were granted to women with children. It is also significant that the percentage of divorces in which children are affected has risen slowly but steadily since 1922, from 34 per cent in that year to 38 per cent in 1931. Probably children do act as deterrents to divorce, but perhaps not in so powerful a degree as many suppose.

Yet the fact should not be minimized that in the last decade or more considerably over half the divorces have been granted to childless couples. In 1922 the percentage was 56 and in 1931 it had risen to 57. By including in the childless marriages broken by divorce in 1928 those cases where no report was made as to children (a dubious method) Cahen [11] gets a percentage of 63 as representing the infertile marriages dissolved. This leads him to the conclusion that almost two thirds of divorces are granted to childless couples. Such a proportion is almost certainly too high on the basis of census data. It is interesting to note that the annual divorce reports show clearly that divorces decrease in proportion to the number of children in the family. Only 3.9 per cent of the 159,710 divorces in 1932 were granted to applicants having three children and only 0.1 per cent to those having eight. The birth of offspring undoubtedly tends to strengthen the ties of marriage by enriching the lives of husband and wife and more firmly uniting them by the bonds of powerful and absorbing common interests.

[11] *Statistical Analysis of American Divorce,* p. 112.

Divorce in Cities and in Rural Districts.

The belief is widespread that divorce is far more prevalent in cities than in rural districts. On the whole such census figures as are available support this view. San Francisco, with fourteen per cent of the population of California, has 19.8 per cent of the divorces; Denver, with 27.5 per cent of the State population, has 40.7 per cent of the divorces; St. Louis with 23.5 per cent of the State population has 29.6 of the divorces; Richmond, with 7.6 per cent of the State population, has 14.6 per cent of the divorces; Baltimore, with 51.6 per cent of Maryland's population, has 74.4 per cent of its divorces.[12] Of course, as Ogburn has pointed out [13] the comparisons in the 1924 report are of large cities with the remainder of the State, which includes other cities, towns and villages. If the data were available to compare cities with rural districts Ogburn believes the disparity in divorce figures would be much greater. Probably the social and economic conditions prevalent in cities—the hurry, competition and nervous strain, the hectic social life in some groups, the breakdown of ancient moral standards, the indifference of the public to the conduct of individuals so long as the outward decencies are preserved—all these and other conditions are conducive to divorce in urban centers.

Summary of Divorce Statistics.

When the foregoing facts regarding divorce in the United States are pieced together, the student may obtain a composite picture of the American divorce scene. For over sixty years divorces have been pretty steadily on the increase, with a few years of decrease now and then due to war or economic depression. There were more than fifteen times as many divorces granted in 1932 as in 1867, although the population had not trebled. The various geographic divisions differ greatly in the number of divorces reported. For example, divorces are much more numerous in the far West than in the Atlantic coast States. In 1931 the Mountain States granted nearly twice as many divorces as did New England, although the population of those States was less than half the population of the six New England commonwealths. That same year the Pacific division reported over 6,000 more divorces than the Middle Atlantic section, although the population of the Pacific States numbered less than one third that of the Middle Atlantic States.

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[12] *Census Report on Marriage and Divorce, 1924,* p. 34.

[13] Groves and Ogburn, *American Marriage and Family Relationships,* (Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1928), p. 356.

But this is not the whole picture. Nearly three fourths of the divorces obtained in this country in 1932 were granted to the wife as libelant. This is a startling fact. Either women are less patient than men under the necessary demands of the marriage relation (which seems doubtful in the light of history) or marriage bears more heavily on the wife than the husband and offers fewer compensations. The legal causes of divorce vary greatly in number in the forty-eight States, from no cause at all in South Carolina and only one in New York to fourteen in New Hampshire. However, the major causes for which divorces have been granted during the last ten years were cruelty, desertion, and adultery in the order named. Only a few decrees were granted for insanity and incompatibility, which would seem to be causes of major importance. By far the largest number of divorces for any five-year period of married life is granted in the first five years, evidently a difficult time of adjustment and mutual concession for which young couples are poorly prepared—if at all. A considerable majority of legally broken marriages occur in childless families; on the other hand, as the number of children to a family increases, divorce decreases. Finally, the living conditions prevailing in rural districts are probably more favorable to enduring marriages than are conditions in large cities, although little data are available on this matter.

DIFFERENT POINTS OF VIEW ABOUT DIVORCE

Such facts and figures as those discussed cannot fail to call out different responses from men and women of antithetical outlooks on life. The attitudes of two groups in particular deserve special consideration. These may be called the ecclesiastical and the sociological groups. In the first are the clergy of all the orthodox faiths and their followers, with some judges and other earnest people; in the second will be found most of those individuals who have given some study to the genesis and evolution of social institutions, customs, and ideas and have, in consequence, what may be called the sociological point of view in judging all social problems.

The Ecclesiastical Point of View.

In the sincere opinion of the ecclesiastical group, divorce is an unmitigated evil, and every new legal cause for the dissolution of marriage is looked upon as a fresh "assault upon the marriage compact." Divorce statutes are generally regarded as "threatening the very foundations of the home" and in consequence as "undermining the very substructure of society." The Catholic doctrine regarding divorce is stated in the seventh canon of the Council of Trent, where it is declared that the "consummated marriage of Christians can never be dissolved as to the vinculum or bond, save by the death of either party." [14] In an Encyclical of 1880 Pope Leo XIII described the consequences of divorce as follows:

> Divorce renders contracts changeable; . . . breaks up the domestic relations; sows dissensions among families; lessens and degrades the dignity of woman who is thus exposed to be cast off, after having been the slave of man's passions.[15]

The views of Protestant clerics do not differ widely from those of Rome, although most Protestant sects recognize adultery as a valid cause for divorce. Throughout the entire history of Protestantism in America the various sects, with the exception of the Presbyterians, who recognize "wilful desertion" as a cause, remained consistent to the view that marriage can be dissolved only for "scriptural cause." [16] The alarm with which these sects—Episcopal, Presbyterian, Methodist, Congregational and others—regard the growing laxity in divorce is clearly reflected in the minutes and resolutions of Church Councils. Thus the Congregational Church Council in 1901 records in its minutes the following:

> We view with serious misgivings the alarming increase in divorces and the consequent deplorable result in domestic and social life.
>
> We regard the purity and unity of the family as cornerstones of Christian homes and Christian civilization.[17]

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[14] See H. A. Brau, in A. B. Wolfe, *Readings in Social Problems* (Ginn and Company, Boston, 1916), p. 587.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 586.

[16] See *Matt.* xix, 1–9.

[17] Quoted in Lichtenberger, *Divorce: a Study in Social Causation,* p. 138. By permission of the author.

These statements, both Catholic and Protestant, reveal a curious confusion of thought with respect to the effects of divorce. In every instance, the idea expressed is that divorce strikes a blow at the sanctity of the marriage relation, destroys "the purity and unity of the family" and disrupts the home. Yet a moment's clear, unbiased thinking should serve to convince these clerics that all these conditions *preceded,* instead of followed, divorce. As Professor Ross has pointed out, divorce never broke up a happy home nor defiled its sanctities. What "sanctities" indeed remain in a marriage made intolerable by abuse, sexual license, or drunkenness? How can divorce possibly destroy the "purity" of such a home or disrupt a family life already torn asunder by bitter dissensions or mutual loathing? Obviously the viewpoint of this group is deeply colored by their conviction that marriage is a sacred institution ordained by God and made holy in each particular case *by the nuptial service,* not by mutual love and comradeship. Holding firmly to this dogma, the eyes of thousands of men and women are closed to the fact that divorce does not *create* disunity, but follows upon it; that divorce is not a disease, but a symptom; not a cause, but an effect. Thus in the thinking of the ecclesiastical group, theological preconceptions are responsible for the fact that the cart is all too frequently put before the horse. In his study of the evolution of morals, Lecky holds that no other branch of ethics has been so largely determined by dogmatic theology as has the ethics of marriage and the family, and none will be so profoundly affected by the decay of theology.[18]

The Standpoint of the Sociological Group.

In the view of that growing body of men and women who have learned to look upon all social problems as the product of social forces, divorce can best be understood and evaluated in the light of the economic, social, religious and ethical changes that have engendered it. From this point of view, divorce is not to be summarily condemned, but rather viewed as a warning sign-post of the maladjustment of marriage to existing conditions of life. Since the family is subject to the same social forces as are other institutions of society, it is obvious that no intelligent action with respect to the disruption of family ties can be taken until the deep, underlying social causes of divorce are better comprehended.

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[18] *History of European Morals,* Vol. II, pp. 371–372.

SOCIAL FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR INCREASING DIVORCE

Decline of the Family as an Economic Unit.

Among the chief causative factors of our ever-increasing volume of divorce is the marked decline in the economic functions of the family. A hundred years or more ago, the family was a center of production of food products, clothing and household furnishings. Its members were held together in the firm bond of mutual dependence. During the long centuries from savagery to modern times, by far the greatest part of all productive labor was carried on in the family. Every home was a hive of domestic industry, and every member, from the householder and his wife to the youngest child who could be relied upon to spin thread, had his or her part to perform in maintaining the family. All were linked together by a common need to produce sufficient goods to feed and clothe the group.

Needless to say, all this was transformed during the last century, when domestic manufacture steadily yielded ground to factory production. Millions of men, women, and children respond every morning to the whistle that calls them from their homes to labor, perhaps in widely separated mills and factories. At night the family members meet again in the home, which thus becomes for them chiefly a place for eating and sleeping. It would be difficult to over-estimate the disintegrating effect of the present industrial system upon the interdependence and thus upon the unity of the family. "Incessantly," says Professor Ross, "the factory planes away the economic basis of the family." [19] Even in those cases where an adequate family income renders it necessary for only the father to work outside the home, the disintegrating effect of machine industry is hardly less felt. Set free from her ancient productive tasks, the woman of the prosperous classes frequently has too little to occupy her time, and spends it away from home in a monotonous round of teas and bridge parties. When the family lives in the modern apartment, which is so rapidly supplanting the detached home in our cities, there are few family tasks and responsibilities for the children to be charged with. In consequence, father, mother and children tend to have wholly different occupations and interests.

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[19] "The Significance of Increasing Divorce," in *Century Magazine,* Vol. 78, May, 1909, p. 151.

The Employment of Women in Gainful Occupations.

The influence of modern economic conditions does not end with the break-up of domestic industry. The employment of women for wages, which began even before the Industrial Revolution, was greatly accelerated thereafter, until, at the present time, millions of women are engaged in gainful work in every advanced industrial country the world over. Who can doubt that this condition has had a profound reaction upon family stability? How many of the 117,375 divorces granted in the United States in 1932 to wives as plaintiffs would ever have been brought into the divorce court had women remained in the condition of economic dependence that was theirs until after 1850? No doubt a paramount factor in the rising divorce rate is the fact that both husband and wife fully realize the fact that a woman employed before and perhaps during marriage can support herself after the union is legally dissolved. Probably the majority of divorces would never have been secured had not the industries and professions been opened to women, and had not the law guaranteed to them the separate ownership of property and wages.

The Trend toward Individualism.

Another factor that must be reckoned with in accounting for the increase in divorce is the movement toward freeing the individual from cramping restrictions that hamper his welfare and happiness. Ever since the eighteenth century, the "mighty forces of spiritual liberation" [20] have been at work to secure to every individual the right to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." Especially in the United States, where the individualistic spirit of our pioneer forefathers is still at work, has the doctrine of the worth of personality been most strongly upheld. A logical corollary to this is the conviction that the well-being of the individual is of prior importance to the stability of the social institutions and customs that he has created. Very widespread in this country is the belief that the institution should be the servant of man's highest needs—not his master.[21]

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[20] On this see Lichtenberger, *op. cit.,* pp. 172–182.

It is not difficult to perceive how such a spirit would react upon the family. Men and women reared in the tradition that institutions should be progressively changed to render them more responsive to the universal need for happiness and personal development will not patiently accept the contrary teaching that marriage is a lifelong union, whether it be successful or not. Common sense and regard for personality alike revolt against the theory that the institution of marriage is more sacred than the well-being of those who have entered it; that the integrity of the family should be purchased, if necessary, by the misery and stultification of its members.

The doctrines of the worth of human personality, the right of the individual to the fullest development of which he is capable and the prerogative of the human being to happiness were at first, of course, applied only to men. For generations after the individualistic philosophy of the eighteenth century was born, women remained a subject sex with no independent personality in the eyes of the law and with no command of the purse strings such as would lead to freedom. But when economic changes made women wage-earners, and it was proved that they could stand on their own feet financially, most civilized states began that revision of the laws concerning women which has freed them from economic dependence, has accorded to them the rights of persons before the law, has granted them liberal opportunities for education, and has thrown open to them most of the gates of industrial and professional opportunity. Such a revolution in the lives of women has had its inevitable effect: women have developed their personal powers and gifts like their brothers, and have claimed the same individual right to welfare and happiness. Once unhappy wives meekly bore intolerable wrongs because there was no way of righting them, and accepted marriage as their only vocation for the whole of life. Now, under transformed conditions, they bring court actions to sever galling marriage bonds and enter one of the myriad vocations open to the modern woman. The most dramatic evidences of individualism are seen to-day among womankind, precisely because they were so long denied the status of free individuals and are still in some respects in servitude to traditional ideas.

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[21] A conspicuous exception to this belief is found in the economic sphere, as indicated in Chapter VIII.

Needless to say, the spirit of individualism may well go too far in the direction of self-assertion, and result in an exaggerated egoism which takes no account of social welfare, or indeed of the happiness of individuals whose lives are intimately bound up with that of the egoist himself. Both men and women at the present time occasionally reveal a ruthless determination to climb to complete freedom and so-called "self-expression" on the backs of husbands or wives and children. Such evidences of self-centered individualism are to be expected during a period of transition from an old order to a new. When larger freedom is accorded to mankind, after ages of restraint, it is not surprising that some persons do not know how to use it. A prolonged period of education is essential if men and women are to learn to substitute moral sanctions of their deliberate choosing for the old external compulsions. Serfs cannot be transformed into self-directing freemen merely by striking off their shackles.

Ethical and Religious Changes Affecting Divorce

There can be no doubt that the profound alterations in religious belief and in the popular conception of morality that have been silently taking place since the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species* in 1859 have had a tremendous indirect effect in changing the public attitude toward divorce. As already pointed out, the strongest support of the doctrine that marriage is indissoluble has been the Church with its system of dogmatic theology. In the present age, dogmatic theology has been dethroned from the lofty seat it once so confidently occupied and has been required to reconcile, if it can, certain of its fundamental tenets with the findings of modern science, especially with the doctrine of evolution. This theory teaches that progressive development characterizes all life, not alone organic but social. It follows that institutions and ideas are subject to change, no matter how firmly rooted they appear. The dissemination of popular education in enlightened states has tended to give the masses of the people a modicum of the scientific attitude of mind. Therefore, the citizens of modern states show an increasing indisposition to accept on authority religious teachings that do not square with the facts and methods of the biological and social sciences.

In consequence, there exists to-day a widely prevalent skepticism in matters of religious belief which is bound to undermine still further the dogma that marriage is an institution ordained of God which can only be dissolved for the "scriptural cause" of adultery. In sharp opposition to this view, anthropology and history reveal marriage as a convenient arrangement worked out by early peoples as the best means of insuring to children proper care and to the husband the ownership of legitimate offspring to inherit his property. Only when Christianity had gained a firm foothold in pagan Rome was the dogma of the sacramental nature of marriage taught to the people—a doctrine for which there is little support in the teachings of Christ. Moreover, sincere Christian people are coming more and more to see that Christ's saying that a man should put away his wife only "for the cause of fornication" should be interpreted in the light of Jewish social conditions. At the time of Christ, divorce was very frequent among the Hebrews and took place for the most trivial causes. A man was permitted to give his wife "a bill of divorcement" and send her out of his home if she were displeasing to him in any way. The prophets had begun to criticize the freedom accorded the husband long before the Christian era, but the School of Hillel upheld the husband's rights to free divorce.[22] It was this condition of license that led the Founder of Christianity to react powerfully against divorce save for the one cause of adultery.

It is not alone religious beliefs which are undergoing change. The moral ideas of the present generation have been deeply colored by the theories of evolution. Genetic study of history, of social institutions and of ethical conceptions has convinced many thoughtful men and women that in every age the commonly accepted moral standards and customs are the product of human experience in its effort to promote the welfare of the group. As the conditions of social life undergo change, the prevalent moral ideas tend gradually to accommodate themselves to these changes. No doubt the accommodation would be accomplished more rapidly were it not that two powerful sanctions operate to prevent the alteration of ethical codes—the sanction of custom itself, with its dead weight of inertia, and the sanction of social institutions, especially of religion, which have usually proved hostile to any modification of accepted moral ideas. When once enlightened individuals have grasped the theory of the relativity of ethical conceptions to social conditions, they are reluctant to accept a ready-made morality grounded upon tradition and custom. Moreover, the last fifty years have seen a powerful growth of humanitarian sentiment, and a wide acceptance of the view that morality should make for human welfare and happiness—not obstruct these ends. Thus the ethical ideas of the twentieth century are being continually reshaped in the interest of a practical morality. From this point of view, human institutions exist for man, not man for institutions, and marriage is no exception to the rule. A traditional code of morals declares that it is just and righteous to chain human beings together in a wretched bondage in order to preserve the integrity of the marriage institution; public opinion holds that this code must be altered to correspond to the humanitarian feeling and the common sense of mankind.

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[22] See W. Goodsell, *A History of Marriage and the Family* (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1934), pp. 70–71.

When we are tempted to deplore our rising divorce rate, it may be well to ask ourselves whether this social phenomenon really does point to a decline of morals. In every age of social change from Socrates to the present, the cry of immorality has been raised whenever the teachings of reformers reacted upon the mores. Yet history shows that, on the whole, moral standards have been rising, not sinking, when viewed from the standpoint of human liberation from bonds that cripple personal development. May it not be possible that the present tendency to sever unhappy marriages that were once endured indicates a mounting rather than a falling morality—a finer conception of marriage, not a more degraded one? If marriage be regarded as a union of minds as well as bodies, a joining of mates in sympathetic comradeship and mutual helpfulness, not merely a useful social arrangement for the rearing of children and the transmission of property, divorce becomes inevitable because human choices are not infallibly wise. In earlier times men and women married for reasons of economic and social convenience, and stuck to their bargain (with a few exceptions) because the Church taught that, however unsatisfactory the contract proved, it was wrong to end it. Now, with a nobler conception of the spiritual significance of marriage as a union the very essence of which consists in loving harmony of life interests and purposes, disappointed husbands and wives seek release from a relationship that has realized few or none of these ideals.

On the other hand it is well to remember that all divorces are not sought for idealistic reasons, any more than all marriages are entered into for ideal ends. At the risk of monotonous repetition, it must be said that nothing is more needed to-day than the education of youth in a finer conception of marriage. When once young men and women have grasped this conception, and gained some appreciation of the preciousness of a satisfying marriage and how to win it, they will be slower in forming unions that promise merely physical satisfaction and a home. This is only to say that *cheap ideas of marriage are one potent cause of increasing divorce.*

Professor George Elliott Howard is strongly of the opinion that divorce can in considerable measure be cured by abandoning the custom of "bad marriages." First among the varieties of these he places "light-minded wedlock," the union of a man and woman who "rush into matrimony as if it were a transient fête or a 'society function.' " Even worse is the type that Howard calls "tainted wedlock"—the marriage of the physically, mentally or morally unfit. "Is there," he exclaims, "any boy or girl so immature if only the legal age of consent has been reached; is there any 'delinquent' so dangerous through inherited tendencies to disease or crime; is there any worn out rake who cannot somewhere find a magistrate or a priest to tie the 'sacred knot'?" [23]

Who can deny the essential truth of this charge? Yet even if marriages were always entered into by competent persons with an enlightened realization of the nature and obligations of the contract, it is doubtful if divorce would thereby be cured. Marriage is so delicate and complex a relationship, and human beings are so subject to changes in feeling and in life interests, that it is highly improbable that all marriages can ever be made permanently successful and happy unions.

While our changing morality is being considered, reference should be made to the profound alteration that is taking place with regard to the double standard of morality. The Church has preached for centuries the doctrine that sexual purity is an equal obligation of both sexes without very greatly influencing popular opinion or practice. Witness the widespread existence of prostitution maintained by men, the infidelity of husbands to their wives on the one hand and the chastity rigidly exacted of women on the other, all of which social history makes plain. Now that scientists and physicians are well-nigh united in declaring that continence before marriage and self-control within it work good rather than harm to the health of young men, and now that women have risen to a place of larger influence and power, the double standard of morals has been attacked in recent times with far more effect than in the centuries of the past. Far from subscribing to a social code that demands absolute fidelity of the wife and allows liberal license to the husband, women with unfaithful husbands now uphold their belief in a single standard of morality for both sexes by securing a severance of their marriage bonds through the divorce court. Does this mean a lowered or a heightened morality?

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[23] "Bad Marriage and Quick Divorce," in *Journal of Applied Sociology,* Vol. VI, pp. 1–10.

Transition from the Patriarchal to the Democratic Family.

No discussion of the deeper social causes of our rising divorce rate would be complete which ignored the fact that the modern family has been undergoing a transformation from the patriarchal to the democratic form. During those long centuries of social evolution when the family was governed by its male head with an arbitrary authority that must frequently have resembled a domestic despotism, there was little chance for divorce. The head of the family could satisfy his desires outside of marriage; and the wife was so completely in his power—a power buttressed by the puissant sanctions of law and religion—that it was hopeless for her to free herself from a wretched or degrading union. Within the last two generations all this has been changed. No longer is the family a firmly knit unit held together by the unchallenged authority of husband and father. Rather has it become an association of free individuals, united by love and mutual aid, whose fundamental rights, including those of wife and children, are guaranteed by the law. This basic change in family organization has had a tremendous effect in making it possible for the wife not only to secure divorce for wrongs to herself but also to protect the rights of her children when these are overridden by an arbitrary father. The use to which women have put their new freedom from patriarchal power is evidenced by the fact that for more than fifty years, as we have seen, wives have secured two thirds and more of the divorce decrees granted by the courts.

The Popularization of Law and Education.

A final condition favorable to freer divorce is the popularization of law and of education that has been taking place over a long period of time. As Willcox has pointed out,[24] law was a privilege of the few during most of the Middle Ages. "For centuries," he declares, "legal forms of procedure continued so intricate and expensive that the benefits of law accrued only to the wise or wealthy." Hand in hand with the extension of the suffrage in modern times has gone an extension of the benefits of the law to larger and larger bodies of people once shut out from these privileges. "Whole classes," says Willcox, "have been admitted to court that were formerly excluded by the efficient practical problems of ignorance and poverty."

This statement points to another condition operating to bring about freer resort to courts of law, namely, the removal of the dense popular ignorance that once prevailed. Upon the upbuilding of free school systems in modern states has ensued an opening of new avenues of privilege and opportunity to the hitherto disinherited rank and file of the people. Through the press and the magazine, these plain folk learn that marriage need not be a lifelong yoke if it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the law to be a failure. Although it is probably true that divorce is not so freely resorted to by wage-earners as by the professional and business groups, yet the laboring class has made fairly liberal use of the courts to end marital difficulties, as the records of the Courts of Domestic Relations and of philanthropic organizations show.

IS DIVORCE AN EVIL?

As we have seen, many thoughtful persons at present look upon divorce as an unmitigated evil, a social disease that is sapping the vitality and threatening the very existence of the monogamic family. To their minds, divorce appears as the enemy of marriage sanctity, of wholesome childhood, of permanent home influences, and settled family life. Nor is their view by any means wholly a mistaken one. The severance of marriage ties and the disruption of families which were once established with happiness and hope for the future, not only entail keen suffering upon all sensitive husbands and wives, but furnish more evidences of marital failure to a society already somewhat skeptical of the benefits of monogamic marriage. Not only is this true, but the breaking up of the home and the separation of parents cannot but react harmfully on children. Reared by one parent to whom the court has allotted them, these boys and girls visit only at long intervals the other parent, against whom their minds may have been poisoned. Thus little ones in a home which divorce has torn asunder suffer blindly the effects of their parents' alienation and are deprived of the daily love and influence of father or mother as the case may be. Statistics of the New York Juvenile Court show that 50 per cent of child delinquents come from homes broken by divorce. This percentage, however, is the highest in city records. The correlation between juvenile delinquency and divorce in other cities is considerably lower. Nevertheless, the facts justify the conclusion that if a moderate degree of harmony and contentment exists within a home, it can hardly be questioned that the influence of two well-intentioned parents is better than that of one in the upbringing and guidance of the child.

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[24] "The Divorce Problem, a Study in Statistics," *Columbia University Studies in History, Economics and Public Law,* Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 63.

But there is another side of the question. There can be no doubt that, painful as divorce proceedings may be to men and women of refinement, a divorce decree has opened the door to freedom, renewed the hope of happiness, and released the caged energies of many a husband and wife whose marriage had proved a ghastly mistake and whose home was little more than a prison house for the spirit. Nor is this all. When the critics of divorce attack the practice on the ground of its injurious effects upon children, they show a human proneness to consider only those aspects of the question that will establish their case. The judges and referees in juvenile courts well know that homes where bitterness and conflict have taken up their abode are the worst possible places in which to rear sensitive children. As our knowledge of child nature grows more thorough and intimate, we become increasingly aware of the baneful effects of family jars and friction upon the mental life of children. No one is better fitted to speak with authority on this point than Dr. Miriam Van Waters, at one time referee of the Juvenile Court in Los Angeles. This is what she says: [25]

> To the maladjusted child in the family-group, life is an anxiety; it dwells under a nameless shadow of fear, often a sense of guilt and inferiority. It is forced into the domestic arena, sometimes as a participant, sometimes as silent spectator condemned to lose no matter which partner wins. Adults often imagine in domestic strife the only damage done the child is neglect, or temporary suffering, if it is deprived of a mother's physical care, or the bread-winning capacity

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[25] *Youth in Conflict,* pp. 72–73. Italics mine. (New Republic, Inc., New York, 1925). By permission.

> of the father. But the damage is more extensive and may permanently destroy the child's mental health. No amount of "patching it up" or "returning to live together for the sake of the child" can restore the child if there is an undercurrent of hostility, suspicion and dislike between the parents. For little children are not so much influenced by words and actions of adults as by attitudes. . . . For welfare of the child it is best to subject it to the influence of only one of the combating parents; *two conflicting attitudes are almost certain to produce break-down in the child, in health, sanity, or morals.*

This is the considered judgment of a woman who has for years come into close contact with ungovernable and delinquent children brought by parents or officers into the juvenile court of a great city. And such conclusions, based upon exact knowledge, not upon traditional beliefs or prejudice, must more and more influence the views of all intelligent persons in dealing with questions of human relationships if we are to avoid grave mistakes in social legislation and practice. Trained social workers and juvenile court officers seem to be agreed that the affectionate rearing of a child by one parent who has been divorced is far better than its up-bringing in a home where conflict and recrimination are of daily occurrence but where the husband and wife "do not believe in divorce."

Further knowledge might well force some honest critics to revise their views of divorce as a deplorable social evil. A sounder theory would seem to be that divorce is not essentially an evil, but an index of maladjustment. Social and economic conditions, scientific knowledge and religious and moral ideas have changed so rapidly within two generations that the family has not always been able to adapt itself to the altered conditions. The result is conflict and misery within the home and the ever-increasing frequency of divorce. America has more broken marriages than other nations because it is still a young and forward-looking country, the essence of whose creed is the belief that every one has the right to be happy if his happiness does not encroach upon another's rights. It follows as a logical corollary that when human beings have made grievous mistakes in their choice of mates they should be released from a yoke that has become hateful in order that they may seek (and perhaps find) happiness in a wiser choice. From this point of view, divorce is a sign of the increasing faith of mankind in the beneficent effects of the liberation of personality. Even though the extension of human freedom may cost the price of a mounting tide of divorces, some of which are secured for frivolous or ignoble reasons, society stands ready to pay the cost. For every forward step in the liberation of mankind from shackling customs has resulted in an unworthy use of the new liberty on the part of a minority.

The foregoing is not designed to be a eulogy of divorce. The legal disruption of marriage is usually accompanied by deep unhappiness on the part of all married couples except the incurably frivolous and callous. Likewise children may and do suffer from the effects of broken homes. The cure of divorce, however, seems to lie, not in a frontal attack upon it but in safeguarding marriage and educating the young to prepare for it.

THE MOVEMENT FOR A UNIFORM MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE LAW

The conflicting variety of State laws on marriage and divorce in this Republic has long been a matter of serious concern to a growing body of our citizens. Forty-eight States and the District of Columbia have written into their statute books such a bewildering diversity of enactments concerning legal marriage that these laws have been happily compared to a crazy quilt. In some advanced States, the laws have kept fairly well abreast of enlightened public opinion; whereas in other commonwealths, the statutes still clearly reflect medieval ideas and customs. This absence of harmony in both the spirit and provisions of the State laws on marriage has had distinctly harmful results.

The same marked differences exist with respect to divorce laws. No two States have the same grounds for divorce. These vary from no ground at all in South Carolina and one only in New York to nine in Illinois and fourteen in New Hampshire. Some States, as Nevada, permit divorce after serving notice on the defendant by publication in the newspapers of the State where action is brought. Other commonwealths require personal service of the papers upon the defendant. Again, several States issue only interlocutory divorce decrees, which require an interval of six months or a year before the decree becomes absolute; in other States, the decree requires no such period for second thoughts on the part of the couple—a "cooling-off time" which might lead to their reconciliation.

In view of the diversity of our State codes, which sometimes results in couples finding themselves legally married in one State and not married in another, or holding a divorce decree from one State which is challenged in another, a movement started more than thirty years ago to secure uniformity in the marriage and divorce laws of the forty-eight States. In 1906 the National Congress on Uniform Divorce Laws was held in Washington and Philadelphia. Almost from the first, sharp divergencies of opinion appeared among the delegates. For example, vigorous objection was made to the provisions of the uniform marriage license law submitted by the committee on resolutions. Yet the salient features of this proposed law, providing as it did for two weeks' publicity before issue of the license; for no license issue to the applicants where either is a minor, without the duly attested consent of parents or guardians; for prohibition of marriage without suitable witnesses, should have commended themselves at once to the good sense of all the delegates. Nevertheless, the Congress dissolved without taking action on this and other proposed uniform laws. Since that time, little or no progress has been made in securing uniformity of marriage and divorce legislation by action of the individual States.

In more recent years a concerted effort, sponsored by the General Federation of Women's Clubs, has been made to secure for the United States a uniform marriage and divorce law by means of an amendment to the Constitution. At present, all power to legislate in matters of marriage and divorce resides in the States, and the federal government can take no action to secure uniformity until this authority has been conferred upon it. In January, 1923, Senator Arthur Capper of Kansas introduced in Congress a Uniform Divorce Bill which was preceded by the introduction of a joint resolution proposing an amendment to the federal Constitution. The amendment reads:

"The Congress shall have power to make laws, which shall be uniform throughout the United States, on marriage and divorce, the legitimation of children, and the care and custody of children affected by annulment of marriage or by divorce."

The Divorce Bill, which was framed by Mrs. Edward Franklin White, Deputy Attorney General of Indiana, at the direction of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, contains thirty-eight sections designed to prevent hasty and foolish marriages and to surround divorce with certain restrictions. The marriage law contains enlightened provisions regarding the age of the parties, prohibitions upon marriage of the physically or mentally unfit, giving publicity to the application for a license, witnesses to the marriage, and its registration in the county and

State where it is solemnized. The Divorce Bill provides that divorce shall be granted for the following causes: adultery, physical and mental cruelty, abandonment or failure to provide for one year or more, incurable insanity, or the commission of a felony. Under the terms of the proposed law, applications for divorce must be made sixty days prior to the trial of a case; the defendant must, if possible, be reached through personal service, so that he has full knowledge of the suit and its grounds; both parents must be given access to the children after the divorce is granted; an interlocutory period of one year must elapse before any decree becomes final; the guardianship of the child or children shall be equal if both parents are fit, but the mother shall be given custody of minor children, if she is mentally and morally suited to the responsibility.[26]

Arguments for and against the Uniform Marriage and Divorce Bill.

Since Senator Capper introduced the Uniform Divorce Bill (S. 4394),[27] a flood of controversy over the merits and defects of the proposed amendment has been let loose. Within the limits of this chapter it is impossible to give more than the briefest summary of the arguments pro and con brought forward by advocates and opponents of a uniform divorce law. The friends of the measure lay stress upon the uncertainty of status that results from the variance among State laws. They point out that the status of divorced parties is gravely affected by change of domicile and jurisdiction. Certain States attract unhappy partners by the laxity of their divorce laws; in other States these divorced persons may, and sometimes do, find their status questioned and their right to remarry challenged or even denied in the courts. Again, some States impose upon the guilty party in a divorce the penalty of disability to contract a subsequent marriage. This penalty is easily evaded by resorting to another jurisdiction where the divorce statutes contain no such penalty. In such a case, a legal marriage may be contracted by the guilty party in a neighboring State, after which he may return to his original domicile with the assurance that his marriage will be recognized as valid by the very courts that imposed the penalty. The failure of the States of the Union to reach any sort of agreement with respect to a uniform marriage and divorce law renders it imperative for the federal government to be empowered to secure the much-needed uniformity. If the States have been willing to surrender to some extent their power to legislate as to bankruptcy into the hands of Congress, in order to secure uniformity and end confusion of laws, they should be willing to give Congress by means of a constitutional amendment the authority to end the social evils growing out of conflicting divorce laws.

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[26] For a more detailed account of the bill, see *Journal of Social Hygiene,* Vol. 9, March, 1923, pp. 170–173.

[27] The bill has been re-introduced in the Congressional sessions of 1925, 1927, 1928 and 1930. It is evident, therefore, that the question is still a live issue.

On the other hand, the opponents of an amendment and a uniform law point out that, if the framers of the Constitution had thought it wise to grant power to the Congress to legislate on matters of domestic concern, they would have done so. On the contrary the early Fathers of the Republic realized the wisdom of leaving to the States, differing as they do in environments, social backgrounds, and peculiar circumstances, a high degree of power to make laws in harmony with local ideas and customs. Again the opponents of the amendment insist that its sponsors exaggerate the evil of migratory divorces. By far the largest proportion of divorces—"not less than 75 per cent probably"—are granted to parties actually living under the jurisdiction of the courts granting the decree.[28] There is no widespread popular discontent with the present conditions, as evidenced by the fact that only three States—New Jersey, Delaware and Wisconsin—have adopted the uniform law. Since the "divorce evil" rests not in divorce itself but in the social conditions leading to divorce, the evil will not be remedied by a uniform divorce law.

But the most astute criticisms of a uniform divorce law were formulated by Elizabeth Cady Stanton more than forty years ago. This pioneer suffrage leader pointed out in 1894 that, since the movement for a uniform law was inspired by people who consider our present laws too liberal, the uniformity is only a cloak for a concerted effort to narrow the existing laws. She further declared that local self-government makes possible a variety of experiments on mooted social questions: "The smaller the area over which the law extends, the more pliable are the laws"; whereas the adoption of a uniform national law would not only restrict experimentation, but might result after a period of years in the nation's finding itself bound by a law that was partially if not wholly unsatisfactory.[29]

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[28] An estimate of Walter G. Smith of the Philadelphia Bar. See Julia E. Johnsen, *Selected Articles on Marriage and Divorce* (H. W. Wilson Co., New York, 1925), p. 280.

WILL LEGISLATION CHECK DIVORCE?

America is *par excellence* the nation that is most thoroughly committed to the theory that social evils can be righted by legislation. The vast majority of our people give heart-whole allegiance to the view that the behavior of men and women can be made moral by law. Yet this dogma has been challenged again and again by social writers. Perhaps the most effective denial that legislation will cure divorce is that of Willcox in his excellent study of *The Divorce Problem*. After a careful examination of available statistics concerning the changes in number of divorces due to new legislation, not alone in the United States but in Europe, Willcox declares:

> The conclusion of the whole matter is that law can do little. Agitation for a change of law may educate public opinion. It may even be the most efficient and powerful means of education. Such effects no statistics can measure, and therefore in a paper like this the educative influences of law must be neglected, but the immediate, direct and measurable influence of legislation is subsidiary, unimportant, almost imperceptible.[30]

It is highly probable, then, that the energies that are now being expended so lavishly in securing a uniform marriage and divorce law might much more effectively be employed in trying to improve the conditions of social life and to work out in each State a thoughtful plan of educating youth for marriage.

WILL DIVORCE DESTROY THE MONOGAMIC FAMILY?

In the preceding discussion, the attempt has been made to show that the instability of the present family and the rising tide of divorce mark the fact that the institution of marriage has not been able to adapt itself to changed conditions. It is not surprising that the family is in a turmoil as a result of revolutionary social changes. So are industry, politics, religion and morals. "The whole human family," says O'Hare, "is moving out of an old, worn-out social, economic and theological house into a new one and family jars are bound to result." [31] Nor is there much hope of stemming the flood of divorces by increasing restraints, either legal or religious. As Lichtenberger wisely says:

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[29] See the *Freeman*, Vol. 7, April 25, 1923, pp. 150–151. The arguments for both sides are presented in Julia E. Johnsen, *Selected Articles on Marriage and Divorce*, pp. 241–293.

[30] Doctoral dissertation, Columbia University, 1891, p. 61.

> It is not only futile, but highly undesirable to seek to check the processes of evolution. To attempt to dam the stream without providing a waste-weir is only to compel an overflow, and the formation of new, and perhaps destructive, channels.
>
> Arbitrarily to diminish the number of divorces under existing conditions would be to increase immorality and crime.[32]

Are we then forced to believe that we must accept an ever-mounting divorce rate as a necessary social consequence of family maladjustment? It is probable that, for some time to come, divorces will steadily increase. There is no reason to believe that the peak has been reached. Indeed, sentiments of regard for the individual and his happiness, and of dislike of all coercive methods of binding couples together who no longer love each other, seem to be on the increase as the true nature of marriage is better understood. The time may come when there will be in this country one divorce for every two or three marriages. But this cannot be expected to last. The old family, based on the arbitrary authority of husband and father, will in time give place to the new democratic family held together by love and mutual interest—far more potent forces than coercion. With the development of a new and more humane economic order; with the spread of enlightenment through improved education, both intellectual and moral; with the general acceptance of the idea that no one has the right to coerce another, either within or without marriage, the divorce rate will tend to fall. Says Professor Ross:

> Already there are in sight certain influences that are likely to moderate the headlong movement. The industrial and intellectual emancipation of women will, of course, complete itself; but the old despotic ideal of the family will die out of men's minds and cease to be a breeder of family discord. . . . It is likely that the public, as it wins a deeper insight into the services of the family

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[31] "Is Divorce a Forward or Backward Step?" in *Arena,* April, 1905, p. 414. Quoted in Lichtenberger, *Divorce: a Study in Social Causation,* p. 213. By permission of the author.

[32] Lichtenberger, *op. cit.,* p. 213. By permission.

> to society and to the race, will feel less sympathy with the wrong-doings, weaknesses and whims that shatter it. Individualism, too, is probably at its zenith. In the discussion of human relations we are likely to hear less of the radical note and more of the ethical note. In proportion as the emancipated are led to an ethical view of life, they will cease to regard marriage simply as a fair-weather arrangement with personal happiness in constant view. They will recognize the inexorable demands for patience and self-control, for loyalty through sorrow and sickness, through misfortune and the ageing years.[33]

This is only to say that there are valid reasons for believing that the monogamic family will survive the present storms and make, in course of time, a peaceful harbor. Monogamic marriage is rooted, not only in the mating impulse, but in deep-seated desires for love and home, in sentiments of unselfish devotion to helpless young, of loyal comradeship and mutual aid that have been coming to flower through the long centuries of family history. Slow and halting as their growth has been, nevertheless these sentiments are spiritual realities to-day, imponderable but strong, and tending powerfully toward the perpetuation of that form of sex union which seems best to meet the deepest and highest needs of personality.

TOPICS FOR REPORTS

1. Attitude of Religious Bodies toward Divorce.
    - J. P. Lichtenberger, *Divorce: A Study in Social Causation* (Longmans, Green and Co., New York, 1909), Ch. VIII.
    - A. B. Wolfe, *Readings in Social Problems* (Ginn and Company, New York, 1916), pp. 586–598.
2. New Ethical and Religious Views regarding Divorce.
    - J. P. Lichtenberger, *Divorce, A Social Interpretation* (McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1931), Ch. XIII.
3. The Proposed Uniform Divorce Law in the United States.
    - Lichtenberger, *op. cit.*, Ch. VII.
    - Wolfe, *op. cit.*, pp. 657–664.
    - Julia E. Johnsen, *Selected Articles on Marriage and Divorce* (H. W. Wilson Co., New York, 1925), pp. 241–293.
4. Education as a Preventive of Divorce.
    - Marguerite Wilkinson, Craftsman, Vol. XXI, February, 1912, pp. 473–481.

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[33] "Significance of Increasing Divorce," in *Century Magazine,* Vol. 78, May, 1909, p. 152.

ADDITIONAL SELECTED READINGS

1. J. K. Folsom, *The Family, Its Sociology and Social Psychiatry* (John Wiley and Sons, Inc., New York, 1934), Ch. XII.
2. M. F. Nimkoff, *The Family* (Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1934), pp. 435–439.
3. Groves and Ogburn, *American Marriage and Family Relationships* (Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1928), Ch. XXII.
4. Hornell Hart, and Ella B. Hart, *Personality and the Family* (D. C. Heath and Co., Boston, 1935), Ch. IX.
5. Frank H. Hankins, "Divorce" in *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences,* (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1931).
6. E. R. Mowrer, *Family Disorganization* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1927), pp. 3–88, 145–173.
7. Alfred Cahen, *Statistical Analysis of American Divorce* (Columbia University Press, New York, 1932), Chs. I–VII.

PART THREE

PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN THE FAMILY: THE FAMILY IN THE FUTURE

CHAPTER XVIII

HUSBAND AND WIFE RELATIONSHIPS

COURTSHIP AND BETROTHAL

IN most modern societies the first steps in marriage are choosing a mate, courting, and entering into a formal engagement. By the immature and thoughtless these steps are often taken with a gayety and unconcern, an absence of care and forethought, that augur ill for the future success of the union. For these first essays in intimacy are of profound importance, determining, as they commonly do, the future happiness or failure of the marriage. This, no doubt, sounds like a dull truism to many readers who do not perceive some of the significant facets of courtship and betrothal but rather accept these conventions merely as approved parts of the social pattern. Therefore, a brief consideration of the question of choosing a mate and of the potential values inherent in courting and becoming engaged to another human being seems called for.

In the first place society is not so organized to-day as to make it possible and easy for young people living outside of hospitable family roof-trees to meet persons of the opposite sex freely, informally, and extensively. As already pointed out, scores of thousands of youths of both sexes in our large cities who are earning their livelihood have few opportunities to meet potential mates. This is a very real problem in contemporary society which cannot be laughed aside. It is this unfortunate situation that impels a modern social psychologist to declare that two radical changes are needed in our present social framework—an "organization of the marriage market" and "bi-sexual initiative in courtship." [1] If informal arrangements could be made by churches, clubs, and other associations, whereby young women and men could meet and enjoy sports and recreation of many varieties together, a

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[1] Joseph K. Folsom, *The Family, Its Sociology and Social Psychiatry* (John Wiley and Sons, Inc., New York, 1934), pp. 344–345.

"marriage market" would fortunately be set up and much unhappy frustration and loneliness forestalled. Further, if the ancient ban against any overt efforts on the part of "maidenly" girls to select and court their mates were removed, then two of the most stubborn obstacles to mating would have been put an end to.

In those cases where youths of both sexes are restricted to a narrow range of acquaintanceship choice of a mate is, of course, rigidly limited. It often happens, in consequence, that the first buddings of romantic feeling are taken too seriously. A generous number of "experimental acquaintances," as Groves terms them,[2] seems important to wise choice in marriage; for these varied associations reveal to each sex the potentialities in regard to interests, feeling, activities, and character, in the other. For this reason "calf love" no doubt has its function in the interplay of the sexes. Hamilton found that 100 men who coöperated in his study of marriage had had 681 love affairs; and 97 of the 100 women included in the investigation had had 677! [3] Whether such variety of romantic pre-marital experience is advisable or not, it may be said that three fourths of these men and women, after years of marriage, declared their mutual love and desire to go on living together, even though the relationship was not in all respects satisfying. Such a result could probably not have been obtained if these spouses had not enjoyed a varied acquaintanceship and several "love affairs" prior to their marriage. By means of these immature romances, if entered into with sincerity, the man and the woman come to know (in most cases) what kind of mate they really do and do not desire.

It is perhaps unnecessary to point out that most young persons choose their mates for reasons of strong attraction and liking, and with little consideration for motives of prudence and caution. Therefore he engages in a somewhat thankless task who tries to indicate some of the real dangers to be avoided in selecting an intimate partner in one's life. Sharp differences in family backgrounds—economic, social, and cultural—constitute a real hazard to successful marriage, for these disparities in upbringing, in cultural and social interests, in personal habits, are bound to reveal themselves in the daily intimacy of marriage and serve as stumbling blocks, if no worse, to happy adjustment. The same holds true for great differences in race, in educational opportunity, in religion—rocks on which the marital ship has often broken up. Then, too, even although a youth may rejoice that the girl with whom he is falling in love is so different from himself, he should probably "pull up" in time and ask himself if such sharp divergencies in interests and tastes furnish a solid foundation on which to build a common life. Nature, ever desirous of carrying on the race, may and does trick many a girl and youth, living in a rosy haze of romantic passion, into believing these are differences of no importance.

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[2] E. R. Groves, *Marriage* (Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1933), p. 87.

[3] Dr. G. A. Hamilton, *A Research in Marriage* (Albert and Charles Boni, New York, 1929), pp. 210–211.

Most writers—and indeed most people—hold that disparities in age are a bar to happy marriage. Yet Dr. Hamilton found that the highest percentage of satisfied husbands among the 100 studied were those who had married women from one to three years their seniors. On the other hand, the lowest percentage of satisfied husbands was found among those whose wives were more than five years their juniors. Obviously the evidence in this case is contradictory. Yet Hamilton, out of a wide experience, does not hesitate to say: "Some of the happiest marriages that I have known have been those in which the wife was as much as fifteen or even twenty years the husband's senior, and in my clinical work I have encountered many cases in which men have established exceptionally happy marriages with women who were as much as a whole generation of years younger than themselves." [4] Probably, however, this does not reflect the common experience. Marked disparities in age usually mean real differences in personality growth; it seems hazardous, therefore, to mate crude immaturity with mature personal development, intellectual and emotional.

Certain traits, when clearly revealed in any young person, should serve as warning sign-posts to a youth of the opposite sex that this individual will hardly prove a good mate. Such characteristics as nervous instability, poor health, or marked lack of physical vigor, ungovernable temper, an inferiority (or superiority) complex, proneness to jealousy and possessiveness, persistent untruthfulness, insincerity, unwillingness to accept responsibility—all these are traits that are definitely menacing to happiness in marriage. Youth should be educated early in adolescence to understand what these characteristics signify and what wretchedness they cause in marital life.

After a mate is once selected—and such selection to-day may be the work of the girl or the man—a period of courtship follows, during which intimacy is increased and romantic feeling mounts high. This should be a time when the young couple come to know each other better, to discover congenialities or divergencies in interests and appreciations and above all in temperaments. Unfortunately, these discoveries are not always made, however, primarily because each youth is living in a rose-colored, unreal world of romance, in which the loved one appears wholly desirable. The difficulty in coming to a fuller knowledge and understanding, each of the other, is further enhanced by the fact that each lover is "putting his best foot forward" and more or less consciously striving to appear all that his (or her) idealizing lover believes him to be. No doubt courtship encourages a tendency to idealization, which is characteristic of most adolescents, and this has both its advantages and its disadvantages, as Groves has pointed out.[5] Such romantic and idealizing emotions may in the end culminate in a fine marital relationship if, after marriage, both lovers are willing to face realities and accept responsibility. On the other hand romantic day dreams and a persistent desire to regard the chosen mate as the perfect realization of one's ideal may lead to serious trouble after the daily intimacy of marriage begins. Rude awakenings concerning the real character, habits, attitudes of the beloved do not furnish an auspicious beginning of married life.

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[4] Hamilton, *op. cit.,* pp. 536–537.

If the courting period culminates in an engagement, further intimacy and a deeper understanding of the chosen mate becomes possible. But this much-to-be-desired outcome of betrothal cannot come about through a few weeks or months or even years of going to cafés and night clubs, dances, theaters and movies, however desirable these may seem. A more varied and informal association is necessary. Long country walks, with discussion of all the questions likely to cause sharp differences of opinion after marriage, are an excellent means of becoming better acquainted. Evenings at the girl's home offer chances to explore common interests such as music, reading, discussion of questions of public interest and concern, or planning the future home. It is highly important that a lover know something of his fiancée's family life, her attitudes toward father, mother, brothers, and sisters, and her contributions to their common life. Equally desirable is it that the girl see her future mate in his family setting and observe his relationships to the members of his home, his acceptance or rejection of responsibility. Betrothal, as the ante-chamber to marriage, should be rich in opportunities really to know one's beloved. If it fails to furnish these, it falls short of its true function. Dr. Hamilton tells of the case of an observer who remarked to him that there must be something seriously wrong with "that nice chap's wife" or he wouldn't think of divorcing her. For professional reasons the psychiatrist could not tell him that this "nice chap" was so bound by a "silver cord" to his mother that he should never have married any woman.[6] The engagement period should make it possible to discover such serious hazards to happy marriage in time.

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[5] Groves, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

During the last generation ideas and practices have been transformed with regard to emotional intimacy during courtship days. "Petting" is often carried almost to the limit of physical union and sometimes beyond. Such passionate expression is often justified by young people on the ground that only by these means can they come to know whether they are physically mated or not. Since society is in a transitional era, with the old moral ideas weakening into futility and the ideals of the new age not yet clearly conceived, it is difficult to take a dogmatic stand on this question. If the young couple have been wisely brought up in a home where freedom and enlightenment have been constantly coupled with good taste and responsibility, they will work out their own satisfactory solution of this problem. If they have not been so fortunate in their family training, they will no doubt experiment with greater or less success—perhaps even with tragic results to one or both. Popenoe, who, as Director of the Institute of Family Relations in Los Angeles, has had varied experience of the problems of both married and betrothed couples, declares that sexual intimacy in the betrothal period "appears to be dangerous to future success in marriage," even if in some instances difficulties are avoided. He says that case after case could be cited in which pre-marital sex experience has either been a handicap to success in marriage or has prevented marriage altogether. Despite the fact that contraceptive devices are probably over 90 per cent "safe," an "all-too-frequent result" of sexual experience during the engagement is unexpected pregnancy ending in a hasty, unplanned marriage or in resort to a physician who illegally practises abortion. Even when this result does not occur, Popenoe tells us that the psychological effects of pre-marital intimacy are often not at all what the betrothed pair anticipated. "In surprisingly many cases" the husband twits his wife (at times of disagreement and quarreling) with their premature sexual experience and even declares that he knew he should not have married her. In other instances, one of the partners, more often the wife, brings into the marriage a sense of guilt and humiliation, not felt in betrothal days, that may easily be fatal to marital happiness.[7]

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[6] Hamilton, *op. cit.*, p. 555.

Although in certain European countries betrothal is still viewed as a solemn contract, the first step in marriage, such is fortunately not the case in Anglo-Saxon lands. Therefore, an engagement may be broken in England and America without serious consequences. And this is as it should be, since betrothal is a trying-out period whose primary value and importance is that of discovering each lover to the other. Whatever may be the pain and humiliation entailed in breaking an engagement, that should not stand in the way of such action if it clearly appears necessary. The suffering involved will not be as deep and prolonged as would be the daily pain and bitter disappointment of an unhappy marriage.

MARRIAGE PAST AND PRESENT

As the historical evolution of marriage plainly shows, that institution was, until recent times, a means (approved by society) of satisfying the insurgent sex impulse and of bringing children into the world who would be responsibly cared for. Very early, societies recognized the importance of keeping sexual desire within limits set up by the group and at the same time of assuring a stable home for children. In course of time the powerful sanctions of custom, law, and religion were brought to bear on marriage to hedge it in and make it as permanent as possible, so that a man had assurance that his children and heirs were of his own blood and society was insured against children irresponsibly brought into the world to become a public burden. Occasionally, men and women, brought together not of their own choice in the marital relationship, grew deeply fond of each other and established a fine and understanding partnership. But this was not the primary purpose of marriage which was, it may be repeated, to assure to the man legitimate offspring and an efficient housekeeper, to the woman the security of a permanent home, and to the children the nurture and discipline of parents.

Within a generation or two all this has been changed. Marriage is no longer a social institution primarily designed for the procreation of children but has been transformed into a *personal relationship* between a man and a woman which may or may not result in the birth of offspring. Woman, no longer as of old a complete economic dependent, need not marry for a home if she is willing to work; man can be comfortably provided for in bachelor quarters without a wife-housekeeper; and children are no longer economic assets whom the parents can put to work at an early age and on whom they can depend in old age. Far from having economic value, children in modern times are heavy financial liabilities if they are carefully reared and educated. Thus it has come about that a happy relationship between a man and woman who love each other, once a purely fortuitous by-product of matrimony, usually overlooked as of scant importance, has taken first place as the fundamental purpose of marriage to which all other ends are secondary.

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[7] Paul Popenoe, "Betrothal," *Journal of Social Hygiene,* XX, No. 9, December, 1934, pp. 445–447.

This transformation of marriage from a social contract to a delicately poised personal relationship was made more or less inevitable with the advance of civilization and the transmutation of crude physical lust into that complex impulse, made up of sexual desire and spiritual yearning for unity of soul no less than body, that we call love. Thousands of years have gone into the spiritualization of love and even now few men and women have experienced it in its fullness. The last and hardest lesson the race has to learn, says Carpenter, is the lesson of love. To-day we are deplorably untutored in its heights and complexities, its possibilities for the enrichment of life. Yet it is this perfect love relationship that has become the central purpose of marriage. This being so, it is not difficult to understand that the adjustments which must necessarily be made between two more or less mature personalities, thrown together in daily marital intimacy, are both delicate and difficult. In olden times these adaptations of one developed personality to another were rendered much more simple by the fact that the wife made most of them. Her duty it was to adapt her nature, her hopes, plans, desires, to her husband's will. At present, if a happy relationship is to be achieved in marriage, both partners must give thought and effort to the adjusting, each to the other, of two already formed personalities, inevitably unlike to some extent in intellectual and emotional make-up, in interest drives, in appreciations and enjoyments, and in life purposes. This accommodation of one nature to another is to some extent a life process, for the personal relationships of marriage are not static but ever changing and growing.

If the above be a true account of the significance of marriage to-day, it is small wonder that contemporary writers descant on the marital relationship as "delicately poised," and as a process of "creative accommodation." [8] Keyserling calls it a "field of tension" with the man and the woman at each pole. Now that the "standardized woman" and "standardized marriage" are irrevocably gone, matrimony, in the opinion of Harris, becomes "an exciting personal experiment." [9] Probably most newly wedded couples do not view their union in this light; to them it is a convention they have chosen to accept and therefore they strive merely "to perpetuate a pattern," not to embark upon a spiritual adventure.

Chances of Happiness in Marriage.

At this point it is pertinent to inquire what are the chances of success in a partnership so precariously poised. So much literature has been published concerning the hazards, the injustices, the frustrations involved in marriage that by way of reaction, several studies have been made in recent years to discover "what is right with marriage." Among these is Dr. Hamilton's study of 100 married men and an equal number of married women which disclosed that seventy-eight husbands and seventy-five wives in the two groups wished to go on living with their spouses because they loved them. Only eleven husbands and fifteen wives declared that they did not wish to continue in the marriage relation. To the question "If by some miracle you could press a button and find that you had never been married to your husband (or wife), would you press that button?" sixty-six husbands and sixty-four wives responded with an unqualified, "No," and eight others of each sex replied with a qualified negative, the total being nearly three fourths of all the married persons in each group. Twenty-one husbands and thirty-three wives regarded their marriage as definitely unsuccessful.[10]

It is interesting to note that considerably more wives than husbands were dissatisfied with their marriage. This may point to the fact that marriage entails more disadvantages for women than for men.

Another investigation was made by Katherine Bement Davis of a homogeneous group of 1,000 married women of education above the average. In reply to the question "Is your married life a happy one?" 872 women answered unequivocally in the affirmative, while 116 declared they were partially or totally unhappy and twelve failed to answer the question. Even if these twelve women were accredited to the unhappy group the results show that 87 per cent of the wives in this group were happy and only 13 per cent were unhappy. This is an even more encouraging showing with regard to happiness in marriage than were Hamilton's results with a group only one fifth the size.[11]

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[8] Hornell and Ella Hart, *Personality and the Family*, p. 211.

[9] Frederick M. Harris, *Essays in Marriage* (Association Press, New York, 1931), p. 50.

[10] Harris, *op. cit.*, pp. 69, 74.

The most extensive investigation of marital happiness or unhappiness yet undertaken was made by Lang, a graduate student at the University of Chicago, in 1932. Departing from the method of Davis, who made use of a lengthy questionnaire, Lang asked a number of persons who knew the spouses "very well" to rate as happy or unhappy 7,412 marriages. The ratings showed that 72 per cent of the unions were happy or "very happy" and only 9 per cent were unhappy or "very unhappy." The remaining 19 per cent of marriages were only partially successful. These findings differ little from those of Hamilton and somewhat more from those of Davis.[12]

Factors Making for Success in Marriage.

Here is concrete and reassuring evidence, then, that despite a mounting divorce rate, a considerable majority of married pairs testify that they have been able to work out a happy adjustment. What factors have contributed most to their success, in their own judgment and that of friends who know them well? Fortunately, at least one attempt has been made to find an answer to this important question. A few years ago Chase Going Woodhouse secured the coöperation of 344 married and single persons in filling out detailed schedules describing the character of the family in which they grew up and the factors chiefly contributing to the happiness and success of their home life. In addition sixty-three wives and fifty-one husbands within the group filled out other schedules describing how they were then engaged in maintaining families and to what causes they attributed their success in so doing. Woodhouse discovered, in talking with the coöperating subjects, that the criterion of a successful family was, in the prevailing judgment, "one which developed individuals well adjusted in their personal lives and doing a good piece of work in their particular jobs. Adjustment was the key word." [13]

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[11] *Factors in the Sex Life of Twenty-Two Hundred Women* (Harper and Brothers, New York, 1929), p. 39.

[12] Robert O. Lang, *The Rating of Happiness or Unhappiness in Marriage*. Unpublished M. A. Thesis, Univ. of Chicago. Cited in *Recent Social Trends in the U. S.*, Vol. X, President's Research Committee on Social Trends, (McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1933), p. 701.

When this criterion was applied the results showed 250 families that were beyond doubt happy and successful.

The conclusions of the 344 individuals with regard to the essentials of a successful home were many—indeed, over 2,000 factors regarded as essential were listed. *Personal traits, attitudes, and relationships* were first in numerical importance, 1,136 essentials being listed in this group. Economic factors were listed next with 389 essentials under this head. Then came in order ideals, social training, education in a formal sense, and at the end, numerically speaking, came health. Among the personal attitudes and traits regarded as of supreme value in the relationships of husband and wife *coöperation* far outranked all the others. Then followed emotional dependence and companionship. Next, in much smaller numbers, were listed "confidence, common policy in making decisions, equality, agreement on sex matters, similar background, progressive interests, economic independence, both in interesting work. Fidelity was mentioned only four times and in each case by a man." It is interesting to note in this connection that there was little difference in the traits listed as essential between the replies of the women and the men. In connection with the economic situation the essential held to be most important was "sufficient income," a good half of the 389 replies stressing this. Budgeting was also held to be essential as was "a definite financial system for the household," and good management of the home in which husband and wife coöperated. Two thirds of the sixty-three wives reported a definite effort to adjust to their husbands, while the fifty-one husbands were more conscious of accommodation on the part of both spouses. By way of summary of the replies of the married group of 114 persons we quote from Woodhouse:

> To sum up then the factors which this group have found made their marriage happy, satisfying, successful, were first and most important of all companionship of the husband and wife with congenial tastes and ideals, common interests and common friends; give and take, coöperation, confidence, understanding and frankness, in short, mutual accommodation follow as close sec-

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[13] "A Study of 250 Successful Families," *Social Forces,* VIII, No. 4, June, 1930, p. 512.

onds. Love, children, a desirable character in one's partner, sexual harmony, and health were all present. Add for the wives interesting work and freedom of personality and enough money to avoid worries and its fair handling within the family and one has the picture of the factors which in the opinions of this group have made these marriages happy, satisfying and successful.[14]

It is possible that similar and more extended studies would show numerical differences and differences of emphasis in listing the factors essential to happy marriage, but it is doubtful if personal traits and attitudes would be demoted to second or third place.

Psychological Aspects of Marital Relationships: Personality Patterns.

Since each of the partners in a marriage brings to it his or her own personality pattern, shaped in the family and the social circle in which he moves, it is necessary to examine some of these patterns, for they determine the parts each spouse plays in marital relationships. Obviously if husband or wife has played a rôle of dependence in the family of his youth, he or she will not blossom after marriage into a self-reliant partner prepared to accept responsibility in a new and difficult situation. Love, unfortunately, does not make persons over, and the habit of looking to someone else for initiative and responsible action, or the attitude that independent judgment and hearty coöperation should not be expected of one are sometimes fatal to the success of a new marital venture. If parents have permitted, and sometimes even encouraged, John or Mary to play an infantile rôle in his or her family, such an immature dependent is not transformed by the marriage ritual into a self-reliant, coöperative mate.

Marital history abounds in cases of the disastrous effects of such dependence. At its worst, it takes the form of "parent-fixation," or a deeply ingrained trait of dependency upon one or the other parent to whom the offspring is deeply and sometimes exclusively devoted. In the case of the husband, his love of his mother may interfere with normal heterosexual love and, indeed, may render it forever impossible. The person afflicted with a "mother-fixation"—and this trait is more commonly found in men than in women—is always seeking comfort, sympathy and active help from his mother in meeting the hard spots of life. He cannot face reality and overcome difficulties because he has never been trained to do so. He is forever comparing his wife with his

[14] Woodhouse, *op. cit.*, p. 530.

mother to the disadvantage of his mate and he sometimes tries to make her over in the image of his beloved parent. The woman linked to such a man soon finds she has married a dependent weakling who takes all his worries and defeats to his maternal comforter. Needless to say, the mother is chiefly responsible for the dependency of her son by her failure to help him conquer difficulties in his boyhood. She is likewise responsible for his exclusive devotion to her, by reason of the fact that she probably showed too fond and possessive a love of her son in his boyhood years and claimed too much of his time and affection. In marriages where one member has a parent-fixation, harmonious relationships are fatally handicapped. Only when the dependent member—husband or wife—has been led to face this trait, to acknowledge it, and to struggle against its habitual manifestations whenever they appear is there much hope of happy family life.

Another undesirable personality pattern frequently brought by one spouse or the other into the marriage relationship is emotional immaturity. For one reason or another the man or the woman has not grown up in his emotions but remains fixated at the level of early adolescence. This emotional undevelopment may show itself in several ways. One of its most common forms is clinging to romantic passion as the end of marriage, whereas most happily married couples testify that it is only the beginning. This mistake is much more commonly made by women than by men, who have more often come to grips with reality in business and daily life than have their wives. The woman has enjoyed her courtship immensely; she has liked being the center of attention, the recipient of gifts, and eagerly pursued for her favors. Yet if she cannot face reality, if she cannot turn her back upon romantic glamour and accept a new relationship, intimate, deep and tender, but involving responsibilities and calling for adaptability and self-control, she reveals herself as emotionally immature. She is holding on to the adolescent feelings of courtship instead of growing up to the relationship of marriage, which calls for greater maturity of feeling and understanding of the demands life makes upon adults. Thus she has "utterly lost touch with psychological reality," in the judgment of Fosdick, who goes on to say:

> The fact is that the only complete love life moves out of adolescent romance as inevitably as spring moves into summer, and is consummated in a developing friendship, with common affection for children, common interest in work

and play, and the restfulness of mutual trust. Any experience less than that, or other than that, is psychologically truncated and repressed.[15]

Emotional immaturity may also reveal itself in the ugly form of jealousy and possessiveness. This trait was probably acquired in childhood and was not wisely treated before it became deeply fixed in the personality. Jealousy is generally regarded as one of the meanest of all human emotions and one of the most destructive of marital relationships. All of us have seen painful displays of this trait which may show itself in husband or wife, without regard to sex. The man who sulks because his wife receives marked attentions at a dinner party, the woman who cannot bear to see her husband enjoy talking with another woman, simply have not grown up in feeling. Their emotional development was arrested at the level of the child or the adolescent; and only if they can be led to perceive and admit this fact and to make a brave fight to weaken the hold of this emotional habit is there much hope of happy relationships in marriage.

Groves tells of the case [16] of a man who was so emotionally upset by the attentions his young wife received at a dance that he secretly left the gathering and went home. Missing her husband after a time and fearing that he must be ill or he would not have left her alone, the wife hastened home to find her husband lying in his evening clothes on the bed in a jealous rage. For a while he would not even reply to her anxious questions and only later did she learn that he bitterly resented her popularity with her dancing partners and demanded that she promise never to go to another dance. Here is an example of an emotion that never developed beyond the infantile level, and it is not difficult to imagine what havoc it may play with marital relationships.

Over-sensitiveness, exaggerated egotism, and jealousy are forms of emotional immaturity that may have their source in an inferiority complex acquired in childhood. This haunting sense of inadequacy, the feeling that one is incapable of meeting the challenges and strains of life, that one compares unfavorably with one's mate and, indeed, with most other people as well, is tragically crippling to the whole personality. A person handicapped by persistent feelings of inferiority fears and resents the most well-meant criticism, is constantly on the lookout for slights, and is always trying to say or do something to win admiration from others and thus allay the ever-present sense of being inadequate and inferior. As already stated the origin of the complex goes back to circumstances in early childhood or youth; the feeling was not detected and wisely dealt with by parents and teachers in time to prevent its becoming a fixed mind set. The husband who "goes off the handle" at well-meant criticism from his wife, or constantly tries to assert himself in company and "show off," may be suffering from feelings of inferiority for which his unpleasant behavior is a compensation. The wife who seeks to dominate in small ways that give her the subjective satisfaction she craves as an antidote to her sense of inadequacy, or who weeps and sulks because she has not received the attention and consideration she looks for, may likewise be the victim of an inferiority complex that brings anger, disgust, or humiliation to others, depending upon the personality. Nimkoff relates the case of a "Mr. G." who for years struggled with feelings of inferiority that he was able to trace back to early experiences with his father. The latter, a man of powerful physique, had repeatedly ridiculed his son, even before others, for being small and puny.[17]

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[15] Harry Emerson Fosdick, "What Is Happening to the American Family?" *Journal of Social Hygiene,* XV, No. 3, March, 1929, p. 148.

[16] *The Drifting Home* (Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1926), p. 155.

Folsom speaks of "inferiority frustrations" in marriage which frequently take the form of jealousy. The author made an analysis of 115 cases of marital tensions, derived from literature and personal observations. With respect to frustrations due to inferiority feelings he found that 31 per cent of the men's and 13 per cent of the women's were of this type.[18] The greater proneness of the men to inferiority and of the women to non-personal frustrations Folsom explains by the fact that our present social and marriage systems conflict far more with women's desires for freedom and higher standards of living than with men's; whereas, the unfaithfulness of his wife arouses in the husband not only jealousy, due to the fact that his attitude of possessiveness has been outraged, but a realization that society tends to scorn *him* for his wife's infidelity. The effect is often to develop in him what Folsom calls an "inferiority frustration."

Sexual inadequacy or frigidity is a form of immaturity that is far more often found in women than in men. While thirty-eight men in 100 in Hamilton's study rated their wives as sexually inadequate, only twenty

[17] *The Family* (Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1934), p. 363.

[18] *The Family, its Sociology and Social Psychiatry*, p. 469.

women so rated their husbands. Inability to reach the climax of the sex act in a true orgasm, which is the index of complete sexual adequacy, was characteristic of forty-six of the 100 women in Hamilton's study. Exclusive of the perverts in this group, however, Dr. Hamilton found only one woman who could properly be described as frigid; i.e., quite indifferent to sexual intercourse and unstimulated by it. In the great majority of cases of frigidity, the trouble has its source in psychological or neural conditions—not in physiological. Of the forty-six women who were to some extent frigid, Hamilton found that twenty-one were definitely psycho-neurotic. When children reveal curiosity about sex organs or how babies are born, parents not rarely show indignation, shock, or disgust and answer questions with embarrassment and evasion, if not with a rebuke. In consequence, some children develop feelings of guilt or shame about sex matters that may develop into complexes which they do not outgrow at maturity. These attitudes, more or less unconscious, may prove serious obstacles to satisfaction in marriage. Hamilton found that 68.42 per cent of the husbands who found their wives sexually inadequate were more or less dissatisfied with their marriages—44.74 per cent seriously so.[19]

Another trait in the personality pattern of husband or wife that may be a source of marital friction is the desire to dominate. This urge is usually more powerful in the man than in the woman, probably because the prevailing culture pattern encourages dominance and a feeling of superiority in the husband and discourages them in the wife. Yet everyone knows cases of women in whom the desire for ascendancy is quite as strong as in any man. The dominating spouse may wish to make all the family decisions, to take the initiative in everything, and above all to regulate the lives of all the home members. Not rarely the dominating partner tries to make his or her mate over more to his liking, with an absence of regard for the personality of the other that results in frequent marital clashes. Success in marriage, as Hart has pointed out, is in large measure contingent upon each partner's seeking to help the other to the highest fulfillment of his or her personality. This requires study on the part of each of the possibilities and purposes of the other, of "his needs, his wishes, his unsatisfied longings and his potential attainments."[20]

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[19] Hamilton, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

[20] Hornell Hart and Ella B. Hart, *Personality and the Family* (D. C. Heath and Co., Boston, 1935), p. 212.

Needless to say such an attitude is the very opposite of the dominating spirit that overrides the personality needs of another human being with arrogant ignorance or unconcern.

With a view to discovering the extent of dominance in marital relationships Popenoe has collected data concerning 3,000 marriages of educated persons. Slightly less than one third were dominated by the wife and about one third by the husband, while over one third were marriages on a basis of real equality. Of the wife-dominated unions only 47 per cent were rated by observers as happy, while of the husband-dominated 61 per cent were rated happy. On the other hand, 87 per cent of the equality marriages were rated happy by those who knew the spouses. It is interesting to note that almost as many families were dominated by the wife as by the husband—a situation quite impossible a generation or two ago—and further to note that even now, in an age of nominal sex equality, marriages dominated by the husband show a much higher percentage of happiness than those governed by the wife.

Dr. Smiley Blanton has something to say of the husbands who refuse to recognize their wives as free individuals with the right to some independence in their personal lives. He cites two cases brought to his attention as a physician.[21]

A former actress at the age of twenty-six married a rising young lawyer, and in the course of the next twenty years had six children. Recently, with tears in her eyes she voiced this protest: "You know, Doctor, for four or five years I earned my own living. *Since I have married, my essential personality has not received any consideration.* My husband used to come home late in the afternoon and if he did not find me there, he would upbraid me when I came in and say: 'What do you mean by going away and leaving your children? The place for you is at home!' We have trained nurses and governesses to take care of our children, but I spend practically all of my time looking after them too. Occasionally, however, I feel it necessary to get away for a few hours in order to get some rest. I have to lie to him when I go out, telling him I am called to an important committee meeting or on some civic errand, for only in this way am I able peaceably to get out of the home."

For five years preceding her marriage, another woman—a typical case

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[21] Blanton and Riley, "Shell Shocks of Family Life," *Forum,* November, 1929, pp. 282–287. Italics mine.

—had acted as principal of a large city school, earning a salary of three thousand dollars a year. Her husband was a patriarchal, chivalric Southerner, a lawyer with a practice that brought him about four thousand a year. His wife wished to go on teaching, but he, true to form, refused to let her do any work for money. Accordingly she tried to reconcile herself to family life, and although she was happy for a time, resting and devoting herself to social duties, she soon became dissatisfied. The emotional conflict which she suffered transferred itself into physical symptoms—pains of various kinds. At the present time, three years after her marriage, she is a marked neurasthenic type, going from back specialist to foot specialist for diagnoses of disabilities which actually lie not in the realm of physiology but of psychology.

In these two cases cited by Dr. Blanton, the man and age-old tradition stood strongly together, and the woman, defeated, resorted to a defense not unlike the wartime neurosis termed "shell shock." The adjustment of family life to contemporary conditions was impossible because the man refused to face the facts regarding the emancipation of women.

Spousal Conflict.

All human relationships involve the possibility of friction and conflict. It is to be expected, then, that in so intimate and continuous a relationship as marriage clashings of interests and desires should occur. At times marriage is responsible for a frustration of the deep-rooted wishes of one or the other partner—sometimes of both—and this results in conflict. The following case will illustrate the point.

Mr. A. was a young lawyer, able, industrious, and exceedingly desirous of rising to a position of professional competence and prestige, at the same time that he achieved a comfortable income. His wife was a woman of social charm who enjoyed entertaining and was popular among a wide circle of friends. One evening Mr. A. brought home a brief-case filled with important legal work only to be reminded by his wife of a fact he had forgotten, that they were giving a dinner party that evening. Frustrated in his desire for a long evening of necessary work, Mr. A. went upstairs, dressed for dinner, played the host, and after the guests had departed remarked bitterly to an old family friend as he prepared to get to work, "The economic burden in marriage is very inequitably distributed in my opinion." In Mr. A.'s case he felt frustrated on two counts: his ambition to advance in his profession and his desire for financial security and competence—both interfered with by his wife's lavish hospitality and social ambitions.

Such conflicts frequently occur in marriage. One set of wishes is in sharp opposition with those held by the other spouse. The frustrated partner may conceal his annoyance and sense of defeat so that his mate never becomes fully conscious of it, or his frustration may lead to open conflict, resulting in separation or divorce. Or, again, as Groves has indicated,[22] the sense of being baffled may produce a chronic state of conflict, destructive of marital happiness, even though the union persists.

Because of the blocking—conscious or unconscious—of the deep desires of one partner by the other, husband and wife may vacillate between emotions of love and of hate toward their mate. These feelings are rarely both evoked by an individual to whom we are merely friendly or indifferent; but precisely because one's spouse is a person of profound emotional concern, one may alternately love him or her for bringing opportunities of joy, satisfaction, and release and hate him for frustrating one's dearest wish. This ambiguity in emotions psychiatrists call *ambivalence* and it probably exists in many marital unions—successful and unsuccessful.

When conflicts arise in marriage the partners, if they are serious and well-meaning, are apt to be deeply disturbed and to question whether the marriage may not be a failure. The wise and sensible wait until they have cooled off and then talk over the source of the difficulty, bringing it up into the light of common day, in the hope of effecting a better adjustment by concession on the part of one or both partners. But too many husbands and wives, envisaging the possible failure of all their marital hopes and plans, cannot face the issue squarely and admit their partial or complete responsibility for bringing it about. Such persons seek to find the causes of the failure in the temperament and character or in the actions of their mate. "If John were not such a weakling he would not have lost his job; if he were not so selfish he would not oppose my desires, which are perfectly natural and laudable." "If Mary had ever learned to control her temper we should not be facing this breakup; if she would stay at home where she belongs and not be determined to find a job, all would have been well. I am not to blame for the trouble." Each tries to escape responsibility by arguing that the other is wholly at fault and this attempt at self-justification, called *rationalization,* is all too common in married life, as in life in general. Needless to say the method never helps to restore understanding and bring about a reconciliation.

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[22] Groves and Ogburn, *American Marriage and Family Relationships,* pp. 85–87.

When one spouse is unhappy and suffers a sense of frustration, he or she naturally seeks to find some means of satisfaction in another aspect of the marriage relationship or even outside marriage. Disappointed wives may concentrate their affections on the offspring of the marriage whom they are too apt to smother with affections and fussy care. This is by way of *compensation.* The husband who finds little or no satisfaction in sexual intercourse with his wife may seek enjoyment elsewhere. Dr. Hamilton found that twenty-eight of the 100 husbands in his study had at some time sought sexual pleasure outside their home; and of this number not far from three fourths belonged to the group dissatisfied with their marriage. It is more surprising to learn that twenty-four wives had done likewise; of this number only 16.67 per cent expressed satisfaction with their marriage.[23] Sometimes the dissatisfied husband or wife compensates by throwing himself into work, or into social or political activities, or by finding a lover capable of stirring romantic feeling, whom he or she endows with the qualities not found in the spouse. Such compensations are poor substitutes for a happy marriage that has achieved mutual understanding and adjustment and that has flowered in a loving comradeship that is the deepest source of joy and contentment in life.

AREAS OF CONFLICT IN MARRIAGE

Certain areas of marital experience seem more fruitful in disagreements than others. Among these may be listed (1) sex relationships, (2) financial and economic matters, (3) children, and (4) the extra-domestic employment of wives.

Problems of Sexual Adjustment.

Perhaps enough has already been written to suggest that satisfying sexual adjustments in marriage are often made with difficulty, no matter how ardently the married pair may be in love. The consummation of sexual intimacy in a complete and satisfying sexual act may be impeded by physiological conditions of which one or the other mate was ignorant and which can in many cases be corrected by a physician. For this reason it is highly desirable that a medical examination of each partner should precede marriage. However, such cases are probably not frequent. One of the most serious causes of sexual maladjustment lies in the attitude of the wife toward the sex act. This attitude may be one of indifference, of distaste, or of active disapproval accompanied with a sense of guilt. Such emotional states of mind prevent the wife from experiencing the pleasure of sexual intimacy between spouses who love each other and may result in a weary distaste for the marital act, or a feeling that it is positively offensive. This attitude may easily be conveyed to the husband and serve not only as a deterrent to his pleasure but forever prevent the couple from attaining that deep, joyful sense of bodily and spiritual union which is the fruition of the complete love act. Dr. Hamilton found that sixty-nine wives out of 100 had at one time or another found the sexual act distasteful and for a variety of reasons. Those most often mentioned were: "her lack of desire or interest" (11), her fatigue (10), pain induced by the sex act (8), his too frequent sex demands (6), his inadequate approach (5), pregnancy (2) or fear of pregnancy (5), lack of harmony between them (4), "no love between them" (2). One wife in each of the following cases mentioned "Puritanical upbringing," the fact that she "had been taught to repress sex," her "feeling that the sex act is degrading," "the thought of the sex act was distasteful before marriage," "the shock of the wedding night," "her belief that the sex act is for procreation only," "their ignorance." [24]

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[23] Hamilton, *op. cit.,* pp. 389, 395.

At least seventeen of these reasons point to early influences in childhood that conditioned the woman against sexual intercourse. Only thirteen of the 100 wives had received "fairly adequate information" from their parents about sex matters; eight had received "vague and inadequate information"; thirty-seven had been given no information, and five had received "warnings against marital copulation." [25] Most of these wives, then, lacking parental instruction, had picked up the information so essential to their happiness from casual sources, not rarely ignorant and vulgar. It is not surprising that 56 per cent of these women found sexual intercourse "a variable experience," on the whole "inadequate,"

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[24] Hamilton, *op. cit.*, pp. 152–153.
[25] *Ibid.*, p. 277.

"uninteresting" or positively "distasteful." [26] Such a record constitutes an indictment of the ignorance and carelessness of parents in permitting their daughters to enter the marriage relation, not only without full and adequate information regarding the sex act and sexual psychology but with no appreciation of the potentialities for deep joy of spirit no less than body that are inherent in sexual union.

But the mistaken attitude of the wife is by no means the only cause of sexual maladjustment in marriage. Physicians and psychiatrists have collected an appalling body of evidence to the effect that husbands plunge into the sex act with no preliminary love-making, no concern that their wives shall experience pleasure, and in complete ignorance of the differences in sexual psychology of men and women. Few men appear to know that most women do not immediately experience pleasure in marital intimacy. Sixty-seven of 100 women in Hamilton's study "hated" their first sex act, or were "horrified" by it, or enjoyed it with definite reservations. This is due to the fact that women cannot get satisfaction from sexual union unless it is prepared for by expressions of love on the part of the husband, by tender consideration of the wife's feelings, and genuine concern that she shall in time experience a pleasure and fulfillment in the sex act as complete as his own. The slowness with which many women achieve pleasure of spirit and body in sexual union is due partly to physiological and partly to psychological causes. Every man who contemplates marriage should be fully informed on these facts and instructed in the need for unselfish consideration of his wife, in view of her different physical and mental make-up and her retarded climax. He should learn that "love play"—overt expressions of love—should precede sexual union if both he and his wife are to experience the highest joys of love. Of this "love play" Havelock Ellis writes:

> Lovers in their play—when they have been liberated from the traditions which bound them to the trivial or the gross conception of play in love—are thus moving amongst the highest human activities, alike of the body and of the soul. They are passing to each other the sacramental chalice of that wine which imparts the deepest joy that men and women can know. They are subtly weaving the invisible cords that bind husband and wife together more truly and more firmly than the priest of any church.[27]

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[26] *Ibid.,* pp. 151–152.

[27] *Little Essays of Love and Virtue,* by Havelock Ellis, copyright 1922 by Doubleday, Doran & Company, 1934 edition, pp. 132–133.

Children and Marital Relationships.

It is a truism, perhaps, to state that children, in this age of apartments, of extra-domestic industry, and of prohibition (to some extent) of child exploitation are more apt than not to be a heavy liability of husband and wife, especially the latter. As an anonymous mother of modest income puts it:

> My children arrived just at the time when space and servants—two essential commodities for the proper rearing of a family—were practically unobtainable for any reasonable sum. This meant that I was suddenly burdened with responsibility, with a great deal of work, and with the problem, in my small and expensive apartment, of too little space. This brought into my hitherto calm life a confusion and strain which I bore very badly.
>
> The incessancy of children appalled me. I could, when I was able to afford them, get vacuum cleaners, electric washers and irons, fireless cookers. . . . But I could not mechanize my babies; nor might I, even for a day, ignore their demands. I was, therefore, entirely at the mercy of my children, unless I could in some manner obtain regular relief from my job. . . . Also there are money worries. . . . The average family in the community consists of one or two children. With our four my husband and I run, worn and panting, on a treadmill trying to give the children even half of what they have a perfect right to expect in the sphere to which we voluntarily brought them.[28]

This situation could be duplicated thousands of times among families of the educated middle class and unquestionably it reacts harmfully on the serene and happy relations of husband and wife existing before the advent of children. An overworked wife and mother, tense with strain and irritation, is not the best of comrades for her husband, who, on his side may be glum and anxious over the ever-pressing problem of how to make ends meet. It is not a rare event for children to come between the happy companionship of husband and wife and virtually destroy it.

Of course, the reverse is also true. All of us, perhaps, know of instances where a brood of children have added zest and joy to living, even in a city apartment, and have woven closer the ties of husband and wife. In one such case the family consists of four children, and the parents would like six if circumstances were different. Both husband and wife teach in colleges—she on a part-time schedule—and they have always been able to secure a good care-taker for the children and help in home management. Friends have only to observe these mates in their family life to appreciate how much they really enjoy their children and how the challenging common interests of husband and wife in their offspring have drawn them together.

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[28] "This Business of Parenthood," *Harper's Magazine,* January, 1931, pp. 174–175.

During the engagement period the question of children should be thoroughly discussed. Then may be brought to light sharp divergencies of opinion as between the betrothed pair. The man or the woman may desire no children, or none for several years after marriage, while the other partner may long for offspring as soon as possible. Such antithetical views should, by mutual concession, if possible, be reconciled before marriage, not after the couple are united. Better a separation during the engagement, if no compromise can be reached, than later when the married pair take up hopefully a common life together.

Although most American husbands shift responsibility for the upbringing of their children on their wives, it not infrequently happens that the guidance of children is a source of conflict between spouses. The husband may believe in "good, old-fashioned discipline" in training the young, the wife in appealing to the intelligence and reason of children. Or the wife may be so happily absorbed in her babies that the husband may feel neglected and jealous. Every young mother should understand that, with the birth of a child into the family, the relationship with her husband is inevitably changed. Much of the time, thought, and comradeship formerly given to her mate must go to the child; but, if the woman is wise, she will seek every opportunity to show her love for her husband, her continued interest in all his deeper concerns, her warm desire for his companionship. A father's jealousy of his children can, in many instances—probably not in all if the husband has an inferiority complex—be prevented by the intelligent foresight and care of the wife.

So far as most persons are concerned, Hart is probably right when he says that one of the deepest sources of life's satisfactions is to have children; that having offspring is an important part of the process of growing to full maturity—"mentally, socially and spiritually." [29] But every young couple should face clearly and courageously just what having children involves of sacrifice, of anxiety, of financial worries as well as of interests and joys. And, having envisaged the situation as it is, they should then agree on when the children shall come, how they shall be reared, and how provided for.

[29] Hart, *op. cit.*, p. 233.

Economic Areas of Disagreement.

Among the difficulties of married life that lead to controversy and conflict probably none is more important than matters of finances and economic management. Although there is much to be said against delaying marriage until the late twenties or early thirties, when the man may be earning an adequate income, yet there is some evidence to the effect that a comfortable family income is closely correlated with satisfaction in marriage. Nearly half the wives in Woodhouse's study mentioned sufficient money and its wise management as factors in the success of their marriage.[30] Fifty-two per cent of the husbands in Hamilton's research who were earning more than $5,000 rated their marriage as highly satisfactory or satisfactory, while 54 per cent of the wives in this financial group indicated relatively high degrees of satisfaction with their marriage. Only 18 per cent of the husbands and 18 per cent of the wives in this group admitted high degrees of dissatisfaction with marriage.[31] Although the numbers in Hamilton's study were too small to justify unqualified conclusions, yet it seems reasonable to believe that the absence of financial worry and strain is probably an aid to marital happiness, although it by no means serves as a guarantor of it.

Friction frequently develops over money matters. If the spouses have different standards of living and of value in consumption goods, it is easy for controversy to arise over these matters. Standards are usually held with a firm conviction of their rightness. If the wife is thrifty and careful in her purchases, accepting a somewhat inferior article because she does not feel justified in paying more, she may come into collision with her husband's cherished standards of beauty and fine quality. She may have learned in her home to be saving and to live well within her income; he may always have spent all he had—or more—in satisfying his exacting standards of consumption and his liking for a "full life" of recreation and entertainment. Or the wife may be the reckless spender, responsible for serious worries over finances on the part of her husband. Nearly two thirds of the husbands in Woodhouse's study worried over money matters, while slightly over one fourth of the wives were disturbed over the same problem. And these were happily married couples.

To the question "Has there ever been friction between you on account of money?" 22 per cent of the husbands in Hamilton's study and

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[30] Woodhouse, *op. cit.*, pp. 529–530.

[31] Hamilton, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

36 per cent of the wives gave an unqualified "Yes," while 16 per cent of the men and 4 per cent of the women answered with a qualified affirmative. Thus 38 per cent of the husbands and 40 per cent of the wives admitted more or less friction over money. Controversies may center about the undue thrift of one spouse or the reckless extravagance of the other. Hamilton found that 14 per cent of the wives in his research thought their husbands "stingy and unfair" or stingy in some things and extravagant in others; while 17 per cent regarded their spouses as extravagant. Of the husbands 7 per cent thought their wives extravagant or unwise spenders and 3 per cent regarded them as "erratic, stingy in some things, extravagant in others." On the whole the wives made the better showing in this respect; 87 per cent of the husbands regarded the wife as "fair," "generous," and "sensible" about money matters while 66 per cent of the wives so regarded their mates.[32] It is possible that the disparity is due to the fact that women, who usually have less money than men, are more careful in spending it.

One perennial source of difficulty between husband and wife has to do with the question of the wife's share in her husband's income. This may take the form of a personal allowance, in addition to the allowance for household expenses, or the wife and husband may share a common bank account. Woodhouse has found the latter method is very common among the educated middle class. Whatever plan is used, the wife who gives a large portion of her time to household and family duties should, as a matter of course, receive her just share of her husband's income. Marriage is a partnership in economics as in love and comradeship, and the wife who skilfully manages her home and makes of herself an intelligent consumer is contributing her full share to the success of the economic part of the enterprise. Many modern women have been employed in the professions or business before marriage and have achieved economic independence. To expect these wives to apply to their husbands for every dollar they spend is to offer them a species of affront which few women who were financially self-reliant before marriage can brook. Yet there are still husbands here and there who keep a firm hand on the purse strings. The sense of power they no doubt derive from this procedure is purchased at the expense of the humiliation and resentment of their wives. Groves is completely right when he says: "A rational preparation of men for marriage in these days includes a clear understanding that what the husband earns out in industry while his wife keeps house must be regarded as a family income, and not conceived of as something to which he has prior rights." [33]

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[32] Hamilton, *op. cit.*, pp. 94–95.

Most of the economic difficulties in marriage could be avoided if husband and wife sat down together as co-partners and did some far-sighted planning with respect to family finances. How much of income should be allocated to savings, how much to insurance, how much to preparation for the coming of children? Such planning is of the greatest value in enabling both husband and wife to take "the long view" with regard to financial management and economic security. Planning together also makes it possible for the economic enterprise of marriage to benefit by the good-sense and sound financial judgment of two heads rather than one. It is not always the husband who has the better gift for income management.

Needless to say long-time planning should be supplemented by making out an annual family budget. To the framing of this should go the best thought of the family members—even the children old enough to understand. Household expenses for rent and food, maid service (if any), laundry, cleaning, furnishing, equipment, heating and lighting, all should be itemized and costs estimated. So with clothing, recreation, books, newspapers and magazines, vacations and hospitality. Husband and wife thus gain a realistic sense of the relation of income and outgo, which should serve as a curb on carefree spending, and irresponsible living. Moreover, the common enterprise of making a family budget *is the best way to quiet controversies about money* and to give to the spouses a sense of their oneness in a common undertaking. Family budget-making is probably more common than a decade or two ago, yet it is surprising to learn of the many families at present who ignore this practice. Hamilton found that only thirteen husbands and thirty-two wives out of 200 educated men and women followed a budget regularly, while forty-eight husbands and forty-seven wives made no attempt at budgeting.[34]

The Extra-Domestic Employment of Wives.

Frequent reference has been made to the growing tendency of married women to enter paid employments. Yet it is still surprising to most readers to learn that the percentage of married women in gainful work has doubled since the opening of the century and that in 1930 almost one wife in every nine was earning her living. In the case of women of the laboring group, the pressure of financial need is the paramount cause of their working outside their homes. Many of these wives can no longer count on their husbands for support, since they are dead or divorced or have deserted them. Even if their spouses are living, they are often incapacitated through sickness and industrial injuries or are unemployed.

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[33] Groves, *Social Problems of the Family* (J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, 1927), p. 87.

[34] Hamilton, *op. cit.,* p. 91.

The situation is somewhat different in the case of wives in the educated middle class. Nowadays, more often than not, college women go to work for a while before marriage. Of 7,689 Smith College alumnæ who replied in 1930 to a questionnaire 37 per cent were employed at the time.[35] Fifty-four per cent of Barnard alumnæ were in gainful occupations in 1930.[36] Of the Smith graduates at work, over 22 per cent were married and of the Barnard workers 25.6 were married. Not all of these wives are driven to work by financial reasons, as is shown in an investigation made by Chase Going Woodhouse in 1929.[37] Of 336 married college women in Woodhouse's study who explained why they were employed outside the home 114, or 33.8 per cent, offered such reasons as "love of work," too much leisure at home, belief in outside work for married women as a "principle," desire for a career, need for social contacts. If these figures are representative of the attitude of educated wives in general, one third of these women enter paid employment because the work is more appealing than domestic occupations. Probably one of the primary causes of its greater attractiveness is the financial independence it usually guarantees.

Obviously the gainful work of married women creates problems in the home. Most husbands hold tenaciously to the idea prevalent in Western cultures that the husband should support his family and should be the sole supporter. A man has imbibed this idea almost with his mother's milk, and with it the further notion that if his wife works outside the home he will be looked down upon by his business and social acquaintances as a weakling and "a poor provider." Naturally, therefore, many husbands of the middle class regard with hostility the desire of their wives for extra-domestic employment. Bitter controversies have developed over this question, the wife feeling that her mate is trying to prevent her continued growth as an individual as well as her financial independence, while the husband cannot understand why his wife is not content with her household duties and why she is not willing to be dependent on his support. Out of these marital discussions, if conducted with fair regard for the spouse's opposing view, may come a better understanding each of the other and a willingness to compromise. The husband, especially, may come to comprehend his wife's sense of frustration and of rusting abilities and may be led (not driven) to coöperate with her in realizing her desire for congenial work. The mores do change, even though tardily, and many husbands at present have come to the point of cheerful acceptance of the wife's employment and of the additions she is able to make to the family income.

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[35] *Smith Alumnae Quarterly,* 1931, p. 409.

[36] From unpublished data.

[37] "Married College Women in Business and the Professions," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* CXLIII, May, 1929, p. 2.

But the conflict is not always so happily resolved. Some men have developed a serious sense of inferiority as a consequence of their wives' gainful work—a complex that reveals itself in irritable self-assertiveness, boastful bluster, or a desire to dominate in the home—compensatory conduct that may well imperil marital relationships. When such a situation arises, the burden of responsible choice in view of relative values falls upon his wife. Is her work, however challenging and developing it may be, of more value to her than a successful marriage? Such a choice is hedged about with difficulties, for if the wife elects to give up her career and try to restore the happy marital relationships that may previously have existed she may find that a resultant sense on her part of unjust frustration is as grave an obstacle to happiness as her mate's inferiority complex.

Sometimes the employment of married women outside the family has the disastrous effect of breaking down the husband's morale and in course of time making him a willing dependent upon his wife's income. Dr. Smiley Blanton relates in the *Forum* the case of a husband whose wife was making a real success in editorial work. In time she was earning more than her husband. Signs of nervous tension on his part culminated in a nervous breakdown out of which he was with difficulty nursed back to health. Once more he resumed work but his listlessness and lack of interest were patent to everybody. Finally he became a nervous semi-invalid and settled down more or less contentedly to being entirely supported by his wife. This and similar instances reveal the grave difficulties some men experience in adjusting to a changed social order in which the employment of married women is becoming increasingly common. These husbands were reared in the traditions of the old patriarchal family, and these ideas, with their accompanying attitudes, were imparted to them in youth quite as often by their mothers as by their fathers. In the course of a generation or two social custom in this regard will probably undergo drastic change and the time-honored principle that man should shoulder alone the entire support of his family will inevitably become less and less compulsive. Of course, this does not mean that wives will no longer find satisfaction and fulfillment in the exacting duties of wife and mother. Observation of married women over a period of years leads the author to the conclusion that a majority have no yearning for careers, no sense of being stultified by domestic employments, but rather find it possible to develop their powers and achieve fulfillment of their talents within the home.

DOES MARRIAGE ENTAIL SACRIFICE OF INDIVIDUALITY?

In olden times it is probable that relatively few men felt that the marriage partnership involved a sacrifice of individual talent and high ambition. The explanation lies, of course, in the fact that it was the function of the wife to serve and promote her husband's success and to this end all good wives bent their efforts. That the wife was herself an individual with valuable potential abilities rarely dawned on anyone's mind—least of all the wife's. But here again social change has transformed the scene. Under present conditions many a man of great talent or real genius must at times feel cramped and impeded by the heavy burden of family support, by the demands made upon him by wife and children for his society, for his interest in their plans, his participation in their recreations. If this be true of the modern husband of pronounced talent, how much more true must it be of the gifted wife, craving an opportunity to develop the superior abilities of which she is fully aware but held firmly by the mores and her husband's will to domestic tasks for which she has small capacity and less interest. The problem of achieving excellence in one's life work and at the same time being a satisfying partner in marriage and a good parent is a very real one. Because our varied contemporary culture is one which *individualizes* every educated man and woman, calling out special talent and genius and offering opportunity for their continuous development, the problem is peculiarly difficult of solution. As Folsom has indicated, moralists and psychiatrists, brought face to face with this question, preach a philosophy of acceptance and inner adjustment, a philosophy which recognizes that happiness lies in learning to choose wisely among the values of life and to accept its limitations. Of these moralists Folsom says:

> They overlook the facts of social change, particularly of modern individuation. This trend cannot be changed by preaching against it. The remedy lies in further social changes which will reduce the incompatibility between interpersonal wishes and non-interpersonal wishes. Among such changes might be new employment arrangements suitable to married women, a reorganization of household labor, a reduced economic parasitism of children, social insurance, and family subsidies. When family members become more *independent* of one another economically, their dependence upon one another for love may involve less frustration and greater happiness. Even though the greater economic individuation of women has been a factor in modern family disorganization, still *it may be that a further decline of the family as an economic unit may strengthen it as an emotional unit.*[38]

It is clear from this statement that Folsom regards the economic aspect of modern family life as the most potent cause of the sacrifice of individuality in marriage, so far as it exists. His proposed solution is exceedingly suggestive. If the family is relieved of many of its most irksome economic burdens, if wives generally contribute to income, if families with children receive social subsidies and the children themselves educational assistance in school and college, who knows but this lifting of heavy economic responsibilities would accomplish much by way of preventing frustrations in marriage and releasing individuality? Unquestionably the family of the past was responsible for much ruthless suppression of individual talent and high ambition. It would be interesting indeed if the family of the future, composed of persons with a considerable degree of economic independence, bound by ties of love rather than financial dependency, should become the nursery of a fine and free individuality.

EDUCATION FOR MARRIAGE

The preceding discussion of marital relationships should have served to make clear that marriage in the twentieth century is not the relatively uncomplicated institution of a simpler society. In the ages when the patriarchal family was firmly established, the will of husband and father was law and the members of his household were compelled to bow to it. This meant that while the patriarch might achieve a fairly complete development of personality, this fulfillment was attained at the expense, to some extent, of his children and to a much greater degree of his wife. Yet the single rule of the household head simplified family relationships; obedience was the watchword and individual protests and conflicting desires were reduced to a minimum. Then, too, in those earlier periods of restricted educational opportunity there was less flowering of individuality than at present. To educate women, broadly and thoroughly, as most advanced nations have done, was to make of them developed personalities, resentful of injustice and subjection, informed instead of ignorant, desirous of continuous growth, and capable of becoming self-reliant, self-directing members of society. Such mates are much more stimulating companions than the meek, uneducated wives of the past, but they are also more difficult to live with.

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[38] Folsom, *The Family, Its Sociology and Social Psychiatry* (John Wiley and Sons, Inc., New York, 1934), p. 476. Last italics mine. By permission of the publishers.

But the growth of individuality, with its attendant conflicts in marriage, is not the only social change that has complicated marital relationships. The economic transformation of society and the family means that the wife is no longer an important producer, whose labor is indispensable to her husband and children as well as a source of family wealth. She has become chiefly a consumer of goods fabricated outside the home—and often an untrained consumer. Therefore idle or only partially employed wives may be economic liabilities of their husbands—not the valuable assets of an earlier age of domestic industry. This situation gives rise to another set of problems largely unknown to our grandparents. To these should be added the many questions regarding the upbringing of children that have arisen out of our contemporary knowledge of child psychology, of which our forefathers were cheerfully ignorant. Finally, changes in public opinion, reflected in law, have given to the wife a degree of independence in sexual relations, both within and without marriage, unheard of in an authoritarian society. Wives now refuse to be obedient servants of their husbands' will in sex matters. They claim the right to a personal pleasure and fulfillment in sexual intercourse once largely restricted to men. In consequence many difficult problems of sex adjustment in marriage have sprung up to trouble husbands and wives, problems that rarely complicated marriage in an age when the woman regarded it as her "wifely duty" to submit to her husband's sexual demands with little thought of her own pleasure. A study of 11,000 consecutive clients of the Institute of Family Relations in Los Angeles revealed scarcely half a dozen cases in which disharmony between husband and wife was not preceded by the failure to make satisfactory sexual adjustments in early married life.

In view of our changed social scene and more delicate and complex marital relationships, the preparation of youth for successful marriage seems clearly indicated. Yet, until a few years ago, such education was almost completely neglected. Young men and women were given thorough training for the professions and business but preparation for the much more exacting vocation of marriage was ignored. Recently a young man who had received a collegiate education involving generous study of Latin literature, wrote to a professor in a large eastern college as follows:

> In college I took the traditional course, receiving a degree upon its completion. Now, I find that the type of education my college gave me would fit me beautifully to become a Roman emperor, but at present there are no indications that I shall ever achieve that position. Alas, my professors were too ambitious for me. They never seemed to suspect that some day I might become a husband and a father. Will you kindly help me to solve some of the problems of family life which my teachers never anticipated that I would encounter? [39]

Fortunately signs are not lacking that the neglect of education for marriage will not much longer persist. In the first place, young men and women are themselves beginning to demand that they be enlightened regarding family problems. At the request of the senior men at the University of North Carolina, a course on marriage has been offered there for the last ten years. Of this course Professor Groves, its instructor, writes:

"The course has not been a series of popular lectures but a serious study of marriage in all its aspects. The content of the course has not only reflected the needs and desires expressed by the students year by year but also the reactions and suggestions of those who have taken it and have later married." [40]

In a dissertation soon to be published Cecil E. Haworth has found, by a study of catalogues, that 234 courses dealing in whole or in part with preparation for marriage and family life are now being offered in 225 American colleges. At the University of Iowa 120 students enrolled in the course on "Modern Marriage" in 1936 as compared with forty-five in the preceding year. Churches, schools, and organizations for adult education are also experimenting with forums and courses leading to preparation for marriage, parenthood, and family life. The trend in this direction is undoubtedly strong at present.

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[39] In the *Social Frontier*, January, 1936.

[40] E. R. Groves, *Marriage* (Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1933), p. viii.

Other agencies designed to help married couples solve their problems of mutual adjustment are the marriage consultation bureaus that are springing up in various parts of the country in response to a wide-felt need. The most outstanding of these agencies is the Institute of Family Relations established at Los Angeles several years ago. This bureau gives both pre-marital and marital advice to thousands of troubled men and women, with regard to a wide range of family problems. There is real need for more of these centers, especially for those that are well staffed with experts in medical practice, in social work, and in psychiatry. Valuable as they are, however, these consultation bureaus cannot take the place of the educational work that might and should be done in every high school and college in the land. Instead of bewailing our mounting divorce rate and becoming cynical about the extent of unhappiness in marriage, it would seem more intelligent and certainly more effective to launch well-considered programs of education for marriage.

TOPICS FOR REPORTS

1. Creative Accommodation between Husband and Wife.
    Hornell and Ella B. Hart, *Personality and the Family* (D. C. Heath and Co., Boston, 1935), pp. 163–170, 203–227.
2. Marital Adjustment and Maladjustment.
    Joseph K. Folsom, *The Family, Its Sociology and Social Psychiatry* (John Wiley and Sons, Inc., New York, 1934), Ch. XV.
    M. F. Nimkoff, *The Family* (Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1934), pp. 373–419.
3. Sexual Problems of Marriage.
    E. R. Groves, *Marriage* (Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1933), pp. 204–267.
    G. V. Hamilton, *A Research in Marriage* (Albert and Charles Boni, Inc., New York, 1929), Ch. VIII.
4. Our Changing Sexual Mores.
    J. K. Folsom, *The Family, Its Sociology and Social Psychiatry* (John Wiley and Sons, Inc., New York, 1934), pp. 396–425.

5. Cases of Marital Tension.
   E. R. Mowrer, *Family Disorganization* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1927), pp. 195–263.
6. Preparation for Marriage.
   Ralph P. Bridgman, "Guidance for Marriage and Family Life," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* Vol. 160, May, 1932, pp. 144–164.

ADDITIONAL SELECTED READINGS

1. E. R. Mowrer, *The Family* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1932), Chs. V–VII.
2. B. M. Hinkle, *The Re-Creating of the Individual,* Ch. VI.
3. M. C. Elmer, *Family Adjustment and Social Change* (Long and Smith, Inc., New York, 1932), Ch. XI.
4. E. R. Groves, *The American Family* (J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, 1934), Chs. IX, X, XI, XVI.
5. Margaret E. Rich (editor), *Family Life Today* (Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1928), pp. 43–57, 102–117.
6. Anna Garlin Spencer, *The Family and its Members* (J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, 1923), Ch. VII.

CHAPTER XIX

PARENTS AND THEIR CHILDREN

The Emotional Dependence of Young Children on Their Parents.

IN an age of swiftly changing conditions like our own, characterized as it is by hurry, pressure, and nervous tension, as well as by the breakdown of old beliefs and standards of action, it would be surprising if the family did not feel the full impact of these conditions. The relationships of the members of the family to each other are profoundly affected by the social milieu, not alone with respect to the economic, legal, educational, religious and social setting of life but with regard to the dominant ideas, modes of conduct and ideals of action that prevail in society. The family has been described as "a unit of interacting individuals," and the responses of its members to each other are conditioned not only by what goes on within the family but by what goes on outside. Each member is in reciprocal relationship with every other—husband with wife, mother and father with children, brothers and sisters with each other—and this interplay of personalities is made more complex in the degree in which the family has wide and vital contacts with the community.

The complexity of our modern age and the present world-wide economic insecurity have greatly intensified the emotional strains under which all adults, and especially parents labor. Never has there been a period in which the contributions of psychology and mental hygiene to an understanding of human personality have been so sorely and generally needed. Mothers and fathers, bewildered by swiftly changing social standards, and by a competitive economic struggle that threatens to overwhelm them, are compelled day by day to face the realities of life with a repeated readjustment of their emotional and intellectual patterns. Parents who have grown to maturity in their thinking and feeling can in time accomplish these readjustments, albeit with effort and emotional tension. But those men and women who have never grown up are incapable of resolving their emotional conflicts in the mature way and have recourse to various methods of escape from reality—day-dreaming, invalidism, or "withdrawal."

What is the relation of these present-day inner conflicts and strains of adults to the healthy physical and mental development of their offspring? It lies in the very great emotional dependence of the child upon his parents. Every child reflects in his behavior to a greater or less degree the unsolved emotional problems of his father and mother, with whom he comes into intimate daily contact within the family. In every age these problems exist for parents but at a time when it would seem that the very foundations of our economic, social, and political structure are tottering and that the human mind is hardly capable of grappling with the perplexing questions thrown up by swift social change, the emotional difficulties of parents are markedly increased. So, too, are the emotional strains of their children. For the child instinctively seeks in the parental relationship security, affection, recognition, and approval. When parents, because of their own unsolved problems and inner conflicts cannot satisfy these deep cravings in the child, he expresses his unsatisfied need in symptomatic behavior and may come to be regarded as a "problem child." In most instances, however, as psychiatrists everywhere will testify, the problems suggested by his harmful reactions to life situations reside more in his parents than in himself. Indeed not a few heads of child guidance clinics have declared that they never dealt with a problem child whose difficulties could not be traced step by step back to inharmonious relationships existing between the members of his family, to their unresolved conflicts, and to the atmosphere of his home.

"Like parent like child" thus takes on a new meaning. Mentally mature and emotionally adjusted parents will, in most instances, rear children capable of facing reality, of coming to grips with their difficulties and of growing in self-knowledge and self-control. On the other hand, the emotional and intellectual immaturity of parents, their inability to solve their own problems, the clash of incompatible personalities, causing friction and conflict within the home into which the child is inevitably drawn, all these frequently result in maladjustments in normal children—enuresis, food difficulties, bad sleeping habits, etc.,—that seem to have little or no relation to the emotional conflicts of parents.

To create within the home an atmosphere of affection, fair play, mutual consideration, and harmony is, then, the primary responsibility of parents. Training the child to conform to reasonable rules, to form regular habits of sleeping and eating, to be well-mannered and neat are important, but the acquisition of attitudes of love, sympathy, contentment, and consideration of others are even more so. As Thom has emphasized, these attitudes, so basic to happy, adjusted living, are not acquired through parental training but are "absorbed" by the child from the spiritual atmosphere of his home.[1] If this atmosphere is not created by parents in the early years of the child's life, when his emotional patterns are being formed, the loss to the child can never be made up later. "Just as the twig is bent the tree's inclined."

Importance of the Early Years of Childhood.

It is perhaps a truism to state that the first five or six years of a child's life are probably the most important in determining his personality and yet it was not many years ago that psychologists and mental hygienists became convinced of this fact, now so widely known and accepted. During these formative years the child receives his first impressions of persons, lays down basic emotional patterns, forms prejudices and habits hard to uproot, learns his first controls over things and individuals. Ever before him in daily association are his parents, whom he observes and imitates at a much earlier age than they can readily believe. Far more potent than the preachments, the rebukes, the punishments meted out by these parents is the example of their own living. Their instructions in courtesy, in consideration for others, in friendliness, and tolerance are of little worth if the child is absorbing from the family atmosphere impressions of friction and hatred, rude, inconsiderate conduct to employees, racial and religious prejudices, outbursts of uncontrolled emotion or sharp, critical comments on friends and acquaintances. "What you are shouts so loud I cannot hear what you say," is a saying that might well be applied by children to their parents. In a very real sense homes are factories and children are their products, revealing, when they go to school, the patterns—emotional, intellectual, social—that they have been shaping under family influences during their earliest years. How far these basic patterns can be changed by later circumstance and education is even yet not surely known. Therefore, the character of the child's first years, under the powerful influence of parental suggestion and example, are of the utmost importance in the building of the adult personality of the man or the woman.

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[1] Douglas A. Thom, M. D. *Everyday Problems of the Everyday Child* (D. Appleton & Co., New York, 1928), p. 39.

PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS AND THEIR OUTCOMES

Childhood Experiences of Parents.

Any account of the personal interplay between a child and his parents, by means of which his tastes and interests, his likes and dislikes, his habits and emotional reactions are formed, should not ignore the fact that the parents themselves are the products of their own home environments and parental influences. When maladjusted children are taken to child guidance clinics, the psychiatrist, more often than not, finds evidences in the parent of unhappy childhood relationships and experiences that are reflected in his treatment of his own child with no consciousness or desire on his part. Thus fathers or mothers whose ambitions were ignored and denied in youth not rarely allow their thwarted hopes to influence their handling of their child. Ignoring his natural inclinations and talents, they strive to make him over into the artist, physician, scientist they longed to be. And this transferred ambition, blinding the parent to what his child really is, frequently influences the mutual relationships of the two disastrously. Family discipline also creates problems. In a case cited by Thom, a father who had been subjected to harsh discipline in his childhood had developed a definite emotional complex about the value of any discipline or exercise of authority whatever. He therefore brought up his own children with complete disregard of rules and social customs both in the home and out of it. Such cases are far from rare.

Unfortunately parents are often quite unaware that their emotional make-up is acting as a handicap to successful relationships with their children. If the mental hygienist whom they consult about their "problem child" can induce them to face the facts regarding their own warped emotional trends, these parents, if intelligent, can be led to change their attitudes and behavior to their children. *Self-knowledge is thus the first important step in parent education* and willingness to change one's methods of guidance is the second. In trying to do his best for the child, a parent may in time win through to sounder emotional attitudes himself. The mother or father who avails himself of the tested knowledge at his disposal in the fields of psychology and psychiatry, and who tries to apply intelligently the advice of a clinical specialist in child behavior may well, as Groves has suggested, receive an education in understanding himself or herself which no college diploma can guarantee.

Child Dependence.

Because the parent-child relationship begins at birth and continues until the child has achieved ability to stand on his own feet, there is ample opportunity for the unwise mother to encourage habits of dependency in son or daughter that may cripple him throughout life. The helplessness of the human infant is complete and persists in some measure during all the childhood years. Nothing is easier, therefore, than for the mother to encourage the child to lean upon her, to bring her all his difficulties to be resolved, to let her do for him everything that he should be learning to do for himself. Yet nothing is of more vital importance to the well-being of the child than that the period of absolute dependence on his parent be shortened as rapidly as is feasible. Little by little the child must be encouraged to do for himself whatever he is able to do, to learn to protect himself from the more obvious dangers, and, above all, to assume some responsibility for his own entertainment. This policy is not in the nature of parental neglect or sidestepping of duties but is essential to the normal development of an immature being into a responsible and independent member of society.

A valuable method in the process of weaning the child from too complete dependence upon home and mother is to encourage him to widen the circle of his interests and his companionships. This is exceedingly difficult for some parents—especially mothers—to do, for they are fearful that Johnnie or Mary will acquire careless habits of language and behavior and will prove a poor judge of "desirable" companions from the parent's point of view. Yet these risks must, to some extent, be run. The child cannot always be sheltered from "home-spun" or even somewhat vulgar companions; it is necessary that his circle of acquaintanceships broaden with the years—on the playground, in school, and in college. If the standards of taste, speech, courtesy, and morals that his parents uphold are really *lived out* in the home, there is scant danger that the child will not unconsciously absorb and apply them to his associates. Companionships outside the family circle not only tend to weaken the strong bonds of physical and emotional dependence uniting mother and child, but they develop the social impulses of children, give them their first appreciation of the variety of human nature, and some degree of tolerance for the different points of view, habits, and interests of others.

Parents who refuse to let the child gradually learn to do for himself, meet his own difficulties, make his own judgments within reason, and profit by his mistakes deny him the right to grow up. Psychiatrists are well acquainted with this type of parent—usually a mother. Their records are full of cases of mothers who keep their children during pre-school years in a state of almost infantile dependence—feeding them, waiting upon their every wish and need, even lying down with them at nap time, and pushing them in baby-carriages or pulling them in carts long after the youngsters should be "finding their legs" and discovering the joys of propelling themselves. After the child goes to school—as he must sometime—the mother shows over-solicitude when he brings to her his fears, his disappointments and failures, instead of helping him to acquire the strength to deal with them himself. In difficulties with other children such mothers always uphold their own child's cause as infallibly right and fight his battles for him. The results of this mother-dependency are almost always disastrous, whether the child be a boy or a girl. Personal independence, so long denied, is rarely acquired in later life. Always the youth is turning to his mother for advice and sympathy, always he (or she) is thinking and planning in terms of what mother would approve. In the case of the boy, however—and mother-dependence appears to be more common among sons than daughters—the situation is made more tragic by the fact that the boy's deep love for his mother, the close tie that binds them and has bound them since he was nourished in his mother's womb, may operate to prevent him in manhood from falling happily in love with another woman. Such mother-bound men, even when they marry, are incapable of making any wife happy and satisfied. Forever they are comparing their wives with their mothers, to the disadvantage of the former, and permitting their mothers a degree of interference with and even control of their lives that often proves intolerable to the wife and in many instances disrupts the marriage.

A few years ago one of the popular plays on Broadway—*The Silver Cord*—had as its central theme the almost complete dependence of two sons upon their mother. She was a charming woman, in both looks and manner, and was accustomed to attention and admiration from men.

After the death of a doting husband in the early childhood of her sons, she turned to them for the love, the services, the personal devotion, she missed in her husband. Although these boys were not handicapped by too much waiting upon, they were enveloped every hour in a sense of their mother's love and solicitude and, as they grew older, they became more or less conscious of her ceaseless demand for their society, their love, and admiration. The older son, during a prolonged period of necessary absence from home, managed to fall in love with an attractive girl of firm character and brought her to his home. The play centers about the bitter disappointment of the mother over the loss of her son's exclusive devotion and of her deliberate attempts to draw him back to the old loving dependence upon her. The wife, when once fully aware of her mother-in-law's intentions, places before her young husband the bitter alternative of leaving his childhood home with her in order to build up their common life together, or of remaining with his mother and falling once more completely under her influence. Almost the mother wins, but at the last moment, when his wife is departing, the man seizes his hat and rushes after her to the cab. The younger son, on the other hand, turns away from the girl who loves and needs him to the mother who has bound him as with an umbilical cord. As the curtain falls, he is sitting on a cushion at her knee and she is pouring out the charm and the demanding love now concentrated on him alone. The spectator realizes that this youth will never grow into an independent human adult, standing on his own feet.

The Dominating Parent.

Another type of parent whose relationships with children are often harmful is the one with an urgent "will to power." Such a father or mother attaches an inflated value to obedience and rules through fear. In his childhood the father may himself have been subjected to stern discipline which made him feel humiliated and inferior and when his time comes he takes out his sense of inadequacy on his child. Most of us have seen parents who love authority for its own sake and get genuine satisfaction out of making others conform to their will. When a father of this type enters the family circle its atmosphere changes. The happy, carefree activities of the children, their sympathetic interchange of ideas and experiences become tinged with anxiety and tension. Who will be the first to be scolded or punished or at the least rebuked? What will go wrong? Of such parents Thom writes out of the fullness of his clinical experience: "We find that this type of parent is merely compensating in the home for his own inferiority, which he feels keenly in his professional and social struggle." [2]

Needless to say, the attempt on the part of a parent to satisfy his urge for power or to compensate for a sense of inadequacy at the expense of his children may, and often does, leave permanent marks on boys and girls. They become timid, fearful, lacking in self-confidence and self-assertiveness, and accept without struggle the domination of the parent and later of others in authority. Or they may seek to gain their own way by lying and deceit. They may come in adult life to distrust all discipline and control, however reasonable and necessary, and bring up their own children with a total lack of respect for others and for rules and social conventions. Such children are generally disliked; yet the fault lies primarily with the parent who has developed in his youth a phobia against every type of authority as a result of unhappy childhood experiences. Finally—and these outcomes are not rare—the child brought up by a masterful parent who believes in severe discipline may develop a permanent inferiority feeling that will prove a handicap in all his relations with others.

Dominating parents who sometimes bring "difficult" children to clinics for advice are not easy subjects to educate. They are always certain that the trouble lies wholly in the child and has nothing to do with their own emotional make-up. Even if they can be persuaded that their methods of handling the child are the real source of all the behavior difficulties—enuresis, trouble with eating or sleeping, lying and deceit—they find it next to impossible to change these methods for the better. Only deep love for the child and a genuine desire for his well-being are motive forces strong enough to modify in dominating parents their will to power, with its accompanying method of governing through fear.

Over-Protection.

Not unlike the parental mistake of encouraging dependence in their offspring and sometimes associated with it, is the error of a fussy and over-solicitous protection of children. There are too many parents, in particular mothers, who are obsessed by fear of "germs," of nine-year-old Tommy's crossing the street and going to school alone, of the possible menace of infection if he associates with other children. Folsom cites recent studies of this problem which agree in holding that probably not far from 25 per cent of youngsters are over-protected.[3] Mothers who are too solicitous about their children are likely to have had too little parental affection and too much responsibility laid upon them in their childhood, which was usually not a happy one. In consequence they suffocate their own children with protective love and preventive care. Quite often, also, a mother of this type is not well-adjusted and happy in her marital relationships. Disappointed in her husband and unsatisfied in marriage, she pours on the child a wealth of thwarted love. He becomes the center of her life and his protection from every ill, real or imaginary, the mainspring of her actions. Children who have had a serious illness in early life or who are handicapped by some defect are more likely to suffer from over-protection than are their more vigorous brothers and sisters.

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[2] Thom, *op. cit.,* pp. 36–37.

The effects of such constant parental fussing, over the health and well-being of a child are harmful in the extreme. Children subjected to such over-solicitude are apt to be self-centered, forever concentrating on ephemeral aches and pains, fearful of infection and exaggerating every symptom of disorder. Parental fears and premonitions are transferred to the child who may become a slave to them. Even in adult life he will probably be unable to free himself from his preoccupation with himself and his fancied illnesses. Molière has pilloried such a man for all time in his ironical drama *Le Malade Imaginaire*. Dr. Thom relates the case of a father who lost his wife from an infectious disease when his little son was only five years old. From that time on the father's relationships with his boy were entirely shaped by that emotional experience. Consumed by dread of losing his boy as he had lost his wife, the father surrounded him with a network of preventive and protective measures to preserve his health. At ten years of age the boy lived in daily fear of acquiring a disease from which he might die. He became deeply self-centered and unhappy and found himself unable to play with other boys.[4] In another instance a little girl who had suffered from infantile paralysis was waited on hand and foot by mother and sisters and was becoming a "chronic complainer," ever seeking to hold the center of the household stage and permitted to do so. Here, again, is evidence of the vital importance of family relationships in moulding the personality of children.

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[3] See "Studies in Maternal Overprotection and Rejection," *Smith College Studies in Social Work,* 2: 181–282 (1932). Cf. Folsom, *op. cit.,* p. 512.

[4] Thom, *op. cit.,* p. 31.

Parental Neglect.

Almost as harmful as too much protection of children is parental neglect and under-protection. Some parents to whom is born a child they did not desire feel dismay and disappointment at the advent of the baby and resent the reorganization of their lives made necessary by his dependent helplessness. Fathers are, perhaps, more apt to neglect an unwanted child than are mothers. In one case, known to the author, the child, a boy, was placed in a nursery when he was little more than a year old because he disturbed his father, who desired more of his wife's attention and companionship than he was receiving. In a private nursery and later in a boarding school this child, the victim of paternal "rejection," has spent most of his ten years. Studies of rejecting mothers show that they are quite likely to have had an unsatisfying childhood, not because of neglect but by reason of too smothering a maternal affection and too little chance for responsibility. A mother thus reared as a child sometimes compensates for the mistakes of her parents by almost starving her child of expressions of love and giving him too little motherly attention and care.

Children of rejecting parents are frequently unhappy. As they grow older and see the affectionate relationships existing between other fathers and mothers and their children, they may come to feel outlawed of life, unwanted and unloved. Children need fellowship with their parents. They need to feel a reassuring confidence that they are matters of deeply affectionate concern and interest to both father and mother. The neglected boy or girl, thrown too much on his own resources and deprived of the comradeship of his parents, suffers a loss that can never be made up to him in later life. Although such a child does not develop the handicap of a parent fixation, he may feel like an "emotional orphan," more or less conscious of loneliness.

Watson relates the case of a young boy, Carl, who felt no security in his relationship with his father who paid no attention to him. Although

Carl was fond of his father and was quick to forgive his neglect and "accept him on any basis," the sole notice the father gave his son was to scold him and demand his obedience in loud, authoritative tones. The boy's parents found no satisfaction in their marriage and there was constant friction in the home. Therefore, Carl, a sensitive, timid child, rejected by his father, feels little security in his home and his emotional conflict and uncertainty are expressed in stammering and sleepwalking.[5]

At present psychologists and mental hygienists, brought face to face with the harmful consequences to children of showing them too much affection and doing too much for them, are laying great stress on the dangers of parent fixation. It may not be long, however, before these specialists will begin to emphasize the peril that lies in neglect of children by parents absorbed in the challenging pursuits and interests of a diverse, ever-changing society. To quote Professor Groves:

> Serious pathological cases more commonly reveal the risk of parents doing too much than the opposite mistake of denying the child a reasonable amount of fellowship. The observer of the average family life of today in this country cannot, however, fail to notice that one of the great dangers is the preoccupation of parents who are content to let their children form all their significant contacts after the very early years of infancy with persons outside the home circle. There is nothing in recent psychology that encourages this sort of family neglect. On the other hand, sociology is replete with illustrations of the bad social consequences that come to homes where the parents have made no investment of themselves in time and sympathy through fellowship with the growing boy or girl.[6]

The Father in the Family.

In past generations the father of a household spent more time with his family and came to know his children better than seems possible in our bustling modern age. During the centuries of domestic industry the father directed the handicrafts carried on in the home. Frequently the whole family, from the wife and mother to toddlers of five years old, carried on one or more of the many processes involved in the textile industry. Under such circumstances a father, however busily occupied, might learn to understand his children and give them some companionship. But in these days of extra-domestic employment, of intense competition in business and constant efforts to "get ahead," the father leaves his home in the morning and rarely returns much before his younger children are in bed. On holidays and week-ends he seeks recreation and relief from strain on the golf links or in one of the many clubs that offer sports and amusements to tired business men. The physical care and the mental and moral guidance of his children he cheerfully leaves to his wife. "Ask your mother," or "No, I can't come with you, I'm busy," are his most frequent remarks when his boys and girls come to him for advice or seek his companionship.

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[5] Maud E. Watson, *Children and their Parents* (F. S. Crofts and Co., New York, 1932), pp. 264–265.

[6] *Social Problems of the Family* (J. B. Lippincott Co., Philadelphia, 1927), pp. 224–225.

Needless to say, both the children and the father are losers in such a situation. The children look upon their father chiefly as the family provider, not as an active participant in the plans, hopes, joys, and small achievements of family life. Somewhat of an outsider, the children may feel they hardly know this busy parent, occupied every day with concerns that seem remote from the activities of the home. What the children lose is the companionship of their father, the outlook on life he brings, which is not wholly like that of the mother, the somewhat different scale of values he upholds, above all his daily interest in their doings, his enjoyment of their society. "Every child needs two parents" may sound like a truism but it is rooted in fact. No mother, no matter how understanding and companionable she may be, can make up to a child for the loss of fellowship with his father and for the comprehending guidance he can sometimes give son or daughter better than the mother.

But the loss is by no means wholly on the children's part. The father who does not share in his child's emotional life loses one of the deepest satisfactions of parenthood, and the same is true with regard to sharing in the mental development of boy or girl. The man who is too busy to be bothered with his child's small joys and woes will never be bothered with his real difficulties. Fatherhood may be a rich and educative experience; why allow all the satisfactions and the daily growth in wisdom to accrue to the mother alone? Out of his wide acquaintance with "fatherless households," in the sense of homes where the father is too preoccupied with business and sports to notice his children, Dr. Thom declares this to be "one of the most pathetic situations in family relationships," which works peculiar hardship on boys after the age of five. If the father neglects to establish sympathetic interest between himself and his child and make himself felt as necessary to the child during his first five years, the chances are that he will never do so.[7]

EFFECTIVE CONTROL OF CHILDREN

Changes in Methods of Control.

In those countries where democracy has been establishing itself since the eighteenth century, there has developed a respect for the human individual and for his rights as a person. However incomplete in its expression, this regard for personality sharply distinguishes democratic societies from totalitarian states like Nazi Germany, where respect for the human being as such has reached its nadir in the constant effort to make every person conform to a preconceived national type. With the gradual development in liberal peoples of regard for the individual has gone a respect for the personality of children in the home. Both are signs of a highly developed civilization. The authoritarian government of parents in the past is being replaced by a more understanding control which takes account of individual differences and seeks above all to help the child to govern himself. Although the old harsh, repressive methods of discipline still linger in the homes of unenlightened parents, they are bound to decrease, with a more general spread of parent education.

Certain tested theories underlying modern control of children need to be *appreciated* by every parent—not merely intellectually apprehended. Mother and father alike must somehow grasp the fact that their child differs from every other child the world over and that if he (or she) is to be controlled successfully the parents must give time and thought to understanding that complex of impulses, feelings, and purposes which is their Tommy or Helen. Acquaintance with the writings of experts in child nature will be of real use to parents in controlling children but such literature will not take the place of study of their own unique child.

Again, it is necessary that parents to-day shall fully realize that every child must live his own life in harmony with his own nature if he is to grow into an integrated adult. This principle, once grasped and accepted, will probably require changed attitudes on the part of most parents. They must not only be willing that their child shall develop, under wise guidance, according to his own nature and not, necessarily, according to his parents' plans and ambitions for him, but they should respect and

[7] Thom, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

value the human pattern unfolding in each child, however sharply it may differ from the type they desire him to be. By recognizing and accepting basal individual differences in their children, parents will not only control them more successfully but will avoid many of those conflicts that embitter the relationships of parents and children.

A third tested theory that parents need to realize is that a considerable proportion of the more serious behavior problems of children are brought about by the emotional mind-sets of parents. This means that the first step in being a good parent is to follow the Socratic doctrine "Know thyself." In this attainment of self-knowledge fathers and mothers can be greatly helped by some of the literature in the fields of psychology and parent education, but even more by a visit to a good child guidance clinic, where a mental hygienist can often lay bare the central source of their difficulties in controlling their children. More often than not the trouble lies in some unsuspected emotional complex in father or mother which, if once faced and realized, may be so modified in its expressions as not seriously to interfere with the relations of parent and child.

Finally, government of children in our modern social setting requires understanding of the principle that control by parents should lead step by step to self-control on the part of the child. If the boy or girl is not steadily growing in power to foresee the consequences of his acts and to regulate his conduct by this foresight, something is wrong with parental guidance.

Obedience.

For centuries obedience has been upheld as the supreme virtue of the child, outranking all other moral values. But with the wider dissemination of respect for personality—even that of an immature child—questions have been raised regarding not only the inherent value of obedience but its deficiencies and defects as a means of controlling children. Intelligent adults have come to see that a persistent demand for unquestioning obedience laid upon the child may run counter to the higher purposes of democracy—the development of intelligent, self-governing individuals, capable of thoughtful appraisement of the purposes of action and the abiding human values.

This is not to say that obedience on the part of children is an outworn virtue and may be thrown into the discard. Parents of very young children know well that babies and toddlers must be trained in instant obedience in the interest of their health and safety. Every child must learn as a matter of second nature to keep away from fire, deep water, street traffic, and all the dangers that menace helpless toddlers, to say nothing of his need to obey when told not to put harmful substances in his mouth. But this period of absolute obedience, during which the child has too little experience to direct his own life, should not be unduly prolonged. As Sidonie Gruenberg has pointed out,[8] the problem of obedience takes on a new aspect when the child reaches the age of three or thereabouts. By this time he has had some experience of his little world and has formed purposes of his own which often come into conflict with those of his mother. There emerges at this point the whole question of the child's future attitude toward life. If the mother insists that her purposes shall always take precedence over the child's, that he shall act in accordance with her wishes and not his own, she denies to him the essential education which comes from thinking through a question, judging for oneself, and accepting responsibility for the consequences of one's acts. This may sound absurd when applied to a small child but it is not so. As soon as the child can understand simple questions of conduct, can be led to put two and two together and see more or less clearly what will be likely to follow from a certain action, he should be allowed some degree of freedom in making choices and accepting responsibility for his acts. Only in this way can he be educated, slowly and not without pain to both parent and child, to become an intelligent, responsible member of his family and of society.

Needless to say the parent must exercise sound judgment in his grants of freedom in order that consequences shall not be too costly. But to refuse to permit a child to think and judge for himself in an ever-increasing degree as his experience grows is to make of him either a confirmed rebel, if his wishes are powerful enough, or, even worse, to hammer him into a pliant instrument in the hands of stronger personalities—a weak individual ever ready to leave decisions to others who may be neither wise nor scrupulous. Out of her broad knowledge of children Gruenberg suggests that "thoughtless minding" when exacted of the child, may result in making a moral sentimentalist who has never learned to connect what he thinks and believes with what he does.[9] Long ago John

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[8] *Your Child Today and Tomorrow* (J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, 1928), pp. 29–32.

[9] *Ibid.,* p. 32.

Dewey made plain that the divorce of thinking and feeling from acting is one of the tragedies of the moral life.

Parents often overlook the fact that certain of their commands are not strictly necessary and sometimes not even well-considered. Economy in giving orders to children and thoughtful consideration of a command to determine whether it is important enough to be insisted upon are virtues in parents. When it becomes necessary to demand something of a child it is sound psychology to put the order in the form of a request. Courtesy is quite as important in dealing with children as it is with adults, perhaps more so, in that the surest method of developing attitudes and habits of courtesy in the immature is to rear them in a home atmosphere of consideration for others.

Needless to say, if parents have not imbued their children with confidence in their judgment and their sense of fair play, if they have not won the respect of their children, the difficulties in the way of enforcing obedience are vastly increased. Many a parent must have been humiliated to discover that Mary's teacher has no trouble in getting her to do what she wishes and that Tommy is obedient and coöperative with the sports leader. Children are far more keen and intelligent observers than parents think and it does not take them many years to discover whether mother really means what she says, has a sense of justice and is consistently thoughtful of others or "puts these qualities on" sporadically as it suits her whim.

The central problem of control for every thoughtful parent is how to socialize the driving egoistic impulses of every normal child without unduly inhibiting them. Groves speaks of the "egoistic recoil" which children feel when they are brought up against things and persons in their environment that resist their wishes.[10] Again and again throughout his early years the child must have this trying experience, but wise parents will not make circumstances so resistant to the child's desires that these are constantly repressed. The ego must be allowed as much free expression as is consonant with a growing regard in children for the rights and wishes of others.

Frequently experts in child behavior have noted the difficulty that some parents have in changing their attitudes toward children and with these attitudes their methods of securing obedience. Yet the effective handling of the child depends in considerable degree on an *experimental*

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[10] Groves, *Marriage*, p. 469.

attitude toward him. If the parents of a difficult child were willing to abandon a method of control as soon as it was clearly demonstrated that it would not work and try another and another with all their intelligence and good-will, parental government would take on the interest of a laboratory experiment. Lindeman suggests that parenthood might become "an adventurous intellectual pursuit" without sacrificing its rich emotional possibilities.[11]

Interestingly enough Folsom believes that successful parent-child adjustment lies either in regaining "real authority" over children or in giving up the "attitudes and pretenses" of authority. Abandonment of family authority, in his judgment, need not mean giving up all social control over children. Some progressive parents have discovered that there are other agencies of control than the family—that, as a matter of fact, the child is controlled "by the actual mores of the community," by the school, his companions, and various community agencies such as the club and the church. More than ever, also, boys and girls are becoming aware of civic duties hitherto largely ignored. Folsom makes the suggestion that parental authority of a personal sort needs to be modified in some measure by this "liberal-legal-impersonal régime of the community." [12]

SOME PROBLEMS CONCERNING CHILDREN

Jealousy.

Among small children jealousy is more frequent than we might wish to believe. Bertha M. Ross found in a study of 1,275 cases of problem children taken from clinical records that in 166, or 13 per cent, of the children jealousy constituted a real problem.[13] Certain data descriptive of the jealous children such as sex, age, intelligence quotients, number of children in the family and the child's ordinal position were compared with similar data applying to the 1,109 children who did not show jealousy enough to be problems. Ross discovered that 11 per cent of boys and 17 per cent of girls were jealous, the standard error of the difference being ± 2 which indicates that it is barely significant. However,

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[11] "Sociological Backgrounds of Family Life," *Parent Education: Types, Content, and Method,* p. 8. White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, Report on Types of Parent Education. (The Century Company, New York, 1932.)

[12] Folsom, *op. cit.,* pp. 523–524.

[13] Bertha M. Ross, "Some Traits Associated with Sibling Jealousy," *Smith College Studies in Social Work,* I:364–374, June, 1931.

Adler has found jealousy more frequent in girls and explains its higher incidence in terms of the culture pattern. The masculine tradition of our society tends to give males a superior attitude and females a sense of inferior position. In Adler's judgment this inferiority feeling of the female conflicts with her "ego drive" and thus girls are frequently jealous. Similarly Mabel Sewall[14] and Ruth Smalley[15] found jealousy more frequent in girls, although not markedly so. Indeed Sewall declares: "Neither sex nor intelligence is a factor of importance in the production of jealousy."

With regard to age Bertha Ross discovered that the proportion of jealous children fell off consistently as ages increased. Below six years of age 21 per cent of children were jealous; between six and fourteen years 14 per cent were jealous; and above the age of fourteen only 7 per cent showed jealousy.[16] It is interesting to learn that Ross found no jealousy in children of low I.Q. but an increase in jealous feeling with a rise in intelligence. Children with I.Q.'s under 70 were free of jealousy, whereas the feeling was present in 14 per cent of the children of average intelligence and in 19 per cent of those of superior intelligence. Sewall found a similar situation: 40 per cent of dull children were jealous as compared with 60 per cent of bright children. Smalley further discovered that the greater the intellectual difference between children, the more likely they were to be jealous of each other. Especially was an older, duller child apt to show jealousy of a younger, brighter sibling. It is highly probable, then, that intelligence is a factor of real importance in determining jealousy.[17]

With regard to the correlation of jealousy with size of family, Ross states that there was a steady decrease in the incidence of jealousy with an increase in the number of children. Whereas 17 per cent of children in the two-child family were jealous of a sibling, only 9 per cent were jealous in families of over three children. There seems also to be some correlation between ordinal position and jealousy. Ross found that first-born children are more likely to be jealous than younger ones. Eighteen per cent of first-born children were jealous of a sibling as compared with 8 per cent of youngest children. This should be no cause for surprise. First-born children are displaced in the attention of the mother by the new baby, and unless care is taken they frequently feel displaced in her affection. Although Ross, in comparing jealous and non-jealous children with respect to certain traits, found no association between fears and jealousy, she did find some correlation between negativism in children and jealousy. Furthermore, her study showed that mothers of jealous children were more prone to over-protectiveness, nagging, and making unfavorable comparisons between children than were mothers in the non-jealous group.[18]

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[14] "Some Causes of Jealousy in Young Children," *Smith College Studies in Social Work,* 1:6–22, September, 1930.

[15] "The Influence of Differences in Age, Sex and Intelligence in Determining the Attitudes of Siblings toward Each Other," *Smith College Studies in Social Work,* 1:23–40, September, 1930.

[16] Ross, *op. cit.,* p. 368.

[17] *Ibid.,* p. 370.

Child study and parent education associations have long taught that the jealousy often shown by an older child to a new baby may be prevented if the child's mind is prepared for the coming of a little brother or sister by his parents. Sewall offers some evidence to the contrary. In a study of 70 cases she found that this preparation made no difference. Obviously no hard and fast generalization can be drawn from such limited data; if 1,000 cases were studied the results might be opposite to Miss Sewall's. It would seem a reasonable theory that parents should scrupulously avoid all well-founded causes of jealousy in children. An only child who has received the exclusive care and affection of his parents should not be confronted with a new baby without careful preparation. A wise mother will tell the child of the expected advent of a small brother or sister, try to enlist his interest in the newcomer and stir his desire to aid and protect the helpless family member. On the contrary, parents have been known actually to try to arouse a child's jealousy of a new baby for their own amusement. This is literally playing with fire, for jealousy, once implanted, is hard to uproot and may easily become a permanent trait of character taking ugly forms. For the same reason parents should carefully avoid showing favoritism toward one child in the family. The records of psychiatrists abound in instances of the harmful effects of this parental error, especially on the unfavored child, who may easily develop an inferiority complex to trouble his relations with his fellows as long as he lives.

In many two-child families, one child may be strikingly more intelligent and attractive than the other. Such a situation furnishes fertile soil for the growth of jealousy and of a serious inferiority complex in the less favored child. Parents should be sensitive to this condition, alert to show affection to and appreciation of the less gifted child, creating opportunities to bring him or her forward and praising judiciously such accomplishments as the child has. Quite often mothers and fathers, with deplorable blindness, fail to perceive the importance of such methods. On the contrary, they join their friends and acquaintances in showering attention and appreciation on the attractive child who can look out for himself and will always win friends and admirers. In one instance known to the writer, a prominent physician with two daughters—one highly intelligent and good-looking, with hosts of friends, the other rather dull, slow, and unattractive—found that as her daughters advanced in their 'teens she had a serious problem on her hands. The dull daughter grew more and more morose and jealous and developed such serious feelings of inferiority that it became necessary to separate the sisters and find for the unfavored girl an educational institution of a sort that would stimulate and develop her practical gifts. The parents in this case were intelligent enough to diagnose the trouble and take steps to solve the problem. But how much better it would be to prevent (so far as possible) such a situation from emerging!

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[18] Ross, *op. cit.*, pp. 370–374.

Exhibitionism.

Among the most deep-seated of our human impulses is the desire to make an impression on others, to command attention and hold the center of the stage. Sensible persons learn fairly early in life to curb this impulse to "exhibitionism" but this does not hold true of young children, who will go to great lengths to center the interest of adults—especially parents—on themselves. If such a tendency is not understood and given wise treatment by parents, a child liberally endowed with this trait may go far toward destroying peace and harmony in his home.

A case in point [19] is that of a small boy about three years old who had developed the habit of throwing himself on the floor and indulging in a temper tantrum whenever his wishes were crossed in the slightest respect. Any adult who has seen a child in such a temper, kicking, screaming at the top of his lungs, and finally holding his breath until he grows purple in the face, will comprehend the alarm felt by the parents of this human mite. Although they tried to refrain from yielding to the child's demands until he resorted to holding his breath, they capitulated at that point and gave the boy what he wanted. Finally, in

[19] Told the writer by the manager of a large nursery school.

sheer desperation, the unhappy parents took their son to a nursery school and explained the situation, saying that the child was spoiling their family life. The father, an army officer, told the head teacher that he had spanked the boy to cure him of tantrums until he "didn't dare spank him any more." With disapproval, the director explained that the father's method was probably the worst he could have used and suggested that the child be placed in the nursery school. The parents gladly consented and the small son was brought to the school the next day. At first he was quiet and a little shy but was finally drawn into the activity of a group of his own age. It was not long before something went wrong and the child threw himself on the floor, screaming and kicking. Quietly the teacher withdrew the children to another part of the room and the play went on. No one looked at the raging boy on the floor and when he played his last card and held his breath until his face turned a purplish red, even then no one seemed interested or concerned. The teacher knew well that no child will hold his breath to the point of suffocation. After a considerable time, during which the boy made all the noise he could, he gradually calmed down and finally turned on his side and surreptitiously watched the children building a railroad. Soon the teacher drifted over to him and quietly asked if he would like to help. Hesitant at first, the boy finally joined the group and played quite happily.

There were several more tantrums during the next few weeks but they ceased when the child became convinced that he could not draw attention to himself that way. His was a clear case of exhibitionism; he would bear even severe spankings to have the alarmed attention of his parents centered on himself. The problem was explained to the relieved father and mother, and it was suggested to them that, while they should not yield to the child during a tantrum, they might well give him more of their affection and companionship in his happy moments. In fact the hint was conveyed that the father and mother had been too much wrapped up in themselves. Following this advice, the parents established a friendly fellowship with their small son whose temper tantrums finally ceased.

Social Attitudes of Children.

Psychologists discovered not long ago that the majority of persons fall into one of two categories—they are extroverts or introverts—while the remainder of human beings are distributed between these two end-groups, belonging partly to one and partly to the other. This is only to say that a large number of people derive their most vital interests from the world about them, while another group, perhaps equally numerous, find their interests primarily within themselves. The extroverts are the social individuals, the "good mixers," interested in persons and what they do, in facts, events, and objective situations. The introverts show a disposition to withdraw from the hustling crowd, the swift current of social happenings, and retreat into themselves in order to reflect upon the larger meanings of things and events. Such persons crave quiet and solitude when life impinges too pressingly upon them—and that often occurs. Most of us probably belong in both groups, revealing in some degree the social traits of the extrovert and, occasionally, the yearning for solitude and reflection of the introvert.

Like adults, children tend to fall into one or the other of these classifications, although, like their parents, a goodly proportion of children belong in both camps. It is highly important that parents study their children and discover as soon as it is feasible whether the child is primarily of the extrovert type or the introvert. This does not imply that fathers and mothers should try to make their offspring over into a semblance of the type they are not by nature. Parents should accept the fact that their son, for example, is an introvert while they themselves are cheerful extroverts, mingling happily and often with their fellows. Father or mother, disturbed by what seems to them unsociability in a child, may easily treat him unwisely, or even harshly, when he withdraws from the group to play or work or read by himself or to think things over. The craving for solitude springs from deep sources in human nature, and parents should not try to thwart it in a child. Introverts by nature cannot be transformed into extroverts and vice versa. Moreover, society has need of both types—the socially minded, objective doer and the artistic or intellectual introvert who must be alone to think and create.

This does not mean, of course, that nothing can be done by parents to make children who stand aloof more interested in others, and children who always want to be with a crowd more thoughtful and self-sufficient. Every home should be a friendly, social place, in contact with the community life and problems at many points. The best possible way to make children socially minded and responsible is for parents consistently to show these traits. When local issues and national and international problems are discussed in the family circle, boys and girls frequently absorb from the home atmosphere a living interest in these questions. The extrovert child may become a social organizer and leader; the introvert may retire into himself to consider the ideal goals of social action and the soundest methods of achieving these ends. Surely the latter is sorely needed in these troubled times.

As already suggested, children are profoundly influenced in their social attitudes by the example and even the thoughtless comments of parents. Friendliness, consideration for others, fairness, absence of racial prejudice are acquired in this way in the child's pre-school years. To seclude children from an ever-widening social circle in the interest of their speech and manners may result in weakening their interest in people, and making them shy or snobbish.

Sex Problems of Children.

Sex to-day presents both social and individual problems that should be honestly faced and understood. The old traditional policy of silence and shame toward sexual questions, the doctrine that children must be protected from all knowledge of sex in the interest of their "purity," have been thoroughly discredited during the past two decades. The method of "hush-hush" has failed disastrously, especially in the case of women, as Walter Gallichan has pointed out. Many an ignorant bride has mistaken her husband's conjugal ardor on their wedding night for gross immorality and is alarmed and affronted by acts that she has previously associated with what is sinful and disgusting. "It is in such revulsions in the early days of marriage," writes Gallichan, "that discord of the most serious character arises; and from one moment of recoil may follow years of secret unhappiness and the annihilation of affection and esteem." [20]

Until recent times adults have believed that infants and very young children are wholly lacking in sexual impulses and interests. But this theory has been discarded by psychologists and pediatricians. It is well known that even a baby may discover and enjoy touching certain peculiarly sensitive areas of the body such as the genitals and if he is not carefully watched and prevented he will, in time, seek sensual pleasure in this way. These unconscious actions may pave the way for deliberate practices of masturbation. The parent should understand how natural the auto-erotic activities of a baby are—as natural as those of young animals—and should not be unduly disturbed by them. Above all mothers should not sharply reprove or punish young children for such acts. The result might well be to bring about an association in the child's mind between sexual pleasure and social disapproval which might become an *idée fixe*. A better method, as often suggested, is to find some interesting *substitute* in the form of manual activity to employ the child's hands. Although tendencies in children to masturbate should be redirected and discouraged, the positive dangers of masturbation have unquestionably been exaggerated. To this practice have been ascribed innumerable diseases, physical and mental, that had no relation to it. Two of the worst outcomes of masturbation are the feelings of guilt and shame generated in children and youths by the practice, which they well know meets with general moral condemnation. These feelings, sometimes intense, are detrimental to self-respect and emotional adjustment. Parents need to be wise and firm in handling this problem, for if frequent masturbation becomes habitual in a child and later in an adolescent, it may result in impotence.

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[20] *A Textbook of Sex Education* (Small, Maynard and Company, Boston, 1921), Part IV, Ch. I.

Children's interest in questions related to sex tends to become active as early as five years of age. Witmer's study [21] disclosed that the median age at which children had first asked where babies come from was five years, although a few children of four or less were curious about the question and another group as old as twelve had never expressed any interest in the matter. When children of twelve have shown no concern about the origin of babies and why girls' bodies are different from boys' the chances are that their parents have, consciously or unconsciously, discouraged such interest and their children have obtained the information from dubious sources. Some parents, unfortunately, are still not at ease when their children ask these and allied questions. Yet the queries do not denote any interest in sex as such but rather the curiosity of active minds about many things in the world around them. Parents who hedge or hesitate or become embarrassed when their child inquires where the new baby came from or why a pregnant mother is so "fat" give the child the notion that there is something not just right about this particular question, that there is more to be said than the parent is willing to tell. In this way the child's curiosity is often actively stirred and he gets his first impression that some facts are *tabu*. If children are not to get a wrong start in sex attitudes, parents will have to take themselves in hand, analyze their own feelings and ideas about sex, the product of their childhood experiences, and strive to change such attitudes as make of sexual relations, conception, and birth, things rather grossly physical about which one is unfortunately embarrassed and ashamed.

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[21] Helen L. Witmer, *The Attitudes of Mothers toward Sex Education* (University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1929).

All sex education, whether negative or positive, starts in the home but it is soon supplemented, as the child's life broadens, by a multitude of influences emanating from companions, movies, newspapers, pictures, books, and overheard comments and conversations of adults. Whether the parent wishes it or not, the education of his child in sex matters is proceeding apace. If the mother and father are intelligent, they know that they must do something constructive and purposeful to forestall these influences and to help their children attain to a true understanding of sex and its commanding rôle in human life, as well as a fine adjustment to sex situations. All around them parents see examples of failure on the part of men and women to gain this knowledge and adjustment. Sexual promiscuity or frigidity, unhappy marriages, homosexuality, auto-eroticism, all bear witness to the failure of homes and schools to give boys and girls that sound enlightenment in matters of sex that every human being sorely needs. Yet, with the best will in the world some parents find grave difficulties in the way of giving their children this education due, as already suggested, to their own warped outlook. It is this situation, met again and again in her relations with parents seeking advice, that impels Sidonie Gruenberg of the Child Study Association of America to write:

> If [parents] are to do anything constructive in the education of their children, it is necessary that they come to understand the nature and source of their own inhibitions and the taboos of the past, and of their own drives and desires. It is necessary for them to recognize that *they can help their children only as they themselves grow in insight and clarify for themselves their own objectives and ideals. They are confronted with a major task of self-education.*[22]

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[22] "Parents' Problems in Sex Education," *Journal of Educational Sociology,* VIII, No. 6, February, 1935, pp. 325–326. Italics mine.

If this be true, fathers and mothers who would help their children to be wise and adjusted in sex matters need to supplement their own knowledge with reading, with frank discussions between themselves of their own inhibitions and warped attitudes (where they exist), and with the practical advice to be gained in parent education and child study groups. In thus preparing themselves to guide their children toward a realm of sex knowledge and experience that is true and beautiful, not distorted and ugly, the parents may discover that they have won for themselves a finer sex life.

Although instruction about the facts and vocabulary of sex is but one part of sex education yet it is a necessary part. Parents may quite casually and unemotionally give children the names of the different parts of the body—preferably the technical names if they are not too long—and discuss with small boys and girls differences in physical structure where these matters naturally come up in the intimacy of family life. Complete honesty, frankness, objectivity, and absence of feeling should be the watchwords in all this informal teaching. Parents may well cultivate a casual matter-of-factness in giving sex information, since it has the great virtue of encouraging a similar attitude in the child and preventing him from attaching any undue importance to what he has learned.

As the child grows in understanding parents should be his first teachers regarding the rôles of the father and the mother in reproduction, the pubertal functions of menstruation in the girl and seminal emissions in the boy, and, as adolescence approaches, the nature of sex attraction, and the dangers of thoughtless yielding to it. If parents have been able to win and hold the confidence of their children, there will be a frank and continuous interchange between them on these subjects. When favorable opportunity offers parents themselves may open up aspects of sex problems which they believe their boys and girls need to be informed about, but never with formality and exhortatory earnestness or with the suggestion that the information has been deliberately "dragged in."

Needless to say, sex education includes much more than the giving of information to children. During the interchange of ideas about sex and the frank answering of questions, the child will be very quick to sense the parent's attitude toward these matters. Especially will he note the true feelings of father and mother when they are "off guard" and are conversing with each other or with friends about sex happenings in their adult social world. This is why it is so essential that parents grow in understanding and sincere idealism regarding the potentialities of sex, its power to illuminate and fructify the individual life, quickening it to its highest achievement. It is a tragedy that so few men and women ever realize the æsthetic and moral possibilities inherent in a fine sex experience. Having failed of this, their conceptions of sexual intimacy and its functions are on a somewhat low and humdrum level, even if they are not marked by grossness or (in the case of women) positive aversion.

The primary rôle played by sex in mating, in the establishing of new homes, in family life, and in making possible that most satisfying of all human relationships, the comradeship of a husband and wife who truly love each other—all this children should learn not alone from direct instruction but from the subtle influences in their own home life. Furthermore, in an era of social change, when marriage and the home are shaken to the depths, youth needs to know the importance of these institutions. In the words of Gruenberg:

> Young people want to know and are entitled to know the lasting meaning of marriage, why both church and state are concerned with it, what more it signifies than a legitimizing of sex relations, why the issue of monogamy is important. What about petting and other courtship problems? What about divorce? And birth control? What is prostitution, and how is it different from sexual promiscuity, whether before or after marriage? [23]

How many parents have adequate knowledge of these matters, how many have clarified their own positions on these crucial questions? Dogmatic answers are impossible and undesirable; but *informed* replies and at least tentative standards of conduct, sincerely held, are essential if parents are to meet with success the problems growing out of the sex education of their children.

REPORTS OF HIGH SCHOOL YOUTHS REGARDING PARENTS

In their illuminating study of a mid-western city,[24] the Lynds furnish two suggestive tables treating of parents and children. The first deals with the sources of disagreement between 730 high school boys and girls and their parents. Of the 348 boys, 45.4 per cent mentioned "The hour you get in at night," and 45.1 per cent the "Number of times you go out on school nights during the week" as their chief points of difficulty with their parents. Of the 382 girls, the largest number (47.6 per cent) mentioned going out on school nights as a source of disagreement and the next largest group (42.7 per cent) mentioned the hour of getting in at night. Other causes of disagreement listed by both boys and girls in from 25 per cent to 40 per cent of the cases were "grades at school," spending money, use of the automobile, and choice of friends. These persistent causes of friction between adolescents and their parents reveal clearly the demand of boys and girls in their 'teens for a larger freedom than many parents are willing to grant. One of the most troublesome of the problems that confront fathers and mothers to-day is how far to yield to the persistent demand of adolescent sons and daughters for a relaxing of parental control and oversight. Some yielding there must be in the interest of the maturing youth who rightly craves independence and hates being held in family leading strings. No child must be tied in dependence to father or mother when he can stand alone. If parents have been successful in implanting in their children standards of good taste and morals before the onset of adolescence, they need not greatly fear to free these youths from too much watchfulness and control.

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[23] Gruenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 331.

[24] Robert S. Lynd and Helen M. Lynd, *Middletown* (Harcourt, Brace and Company, New York, 1929), pp. 522, 524.

Another question is suggested by such recurring sources of disagreement as use of the family car, spending money, and school grades. How far do fathers and mothers make use of the family conference to clear up these difficulties? If from earliest childhood boys and girls have been accustomed "to talk things over" with their parents with the utmost frankness and good nature, it would be possible to settle without constant friction such matters as the fair use of the automobile by the various family members. Friendly conference, too, between parent and child and parent and teacher, could lay bare the causes of low grades at school as no amount of reproach and scolding would do. The difficulty may lie in defective sight or hearing, in fundamental lack of interest in the type of education the boy or girl is receiving, or in plain indolence and failure to see the importance of study. Patient talking it over often helps to enlighten both the parent and the child and paves the way for future improvement.

As for disagreements between parents and children over spending money, this opens up a problem about which a volume might be written. It must suffice here to suggest that every child should receive an allowance, no matter how small, as soon as he knows the use of money and has cravings he longs to satisfy. The spending (or saving for future use) of that allowance can be a very valuable means of educating the child in the wise and satisfying expenditure of money. Here, again, the child should learn from experience, supplemented by talks with father or mother, that the immediate expenditure of all his allowance on "treats" will mean going without money the remainder of the week. Little by little, as he grows older, he can be helped to understand what are the things best worth having and encouraged to save a portion of his ever-increasing allowance for some longed-for recreation or possession of real value. When boys and girls are of high school age they should receive an allowance adequate to their essential needs for clothing, recreation, transportation, school supplies, and philanthropy. If their previous childhood experience in the use of money has been wisely guided, there need be but few instances of persistent disagreements over spending money between high school youths and their parents.

In *Middletown* the authors have also furnished a table giving the "Ratings by High School Boys and Girls of Traits Most Desirable in a Father and in a Mother." [25] In this instance the views of 369 boys and 415 girls were secured. It is highly suggestive that by far the largest number of boys (61.5 per cent) and girls (66.5 per cent) mentioned as a desirable trait in a father "Spending time with his children, reading, talking, playing with them, etc." This rating shows clearly the longing of children for fellowship with their fathers and suggests the absorption of these American fathers in business and recreations of their own in which the children do not share. The second largest group of boys and girls mentioned "Respecting his children's opinions" as a desirable paternal trait. The absence of such respect in a father's intercourse with his sons and daughters, who already have opinions of their own, is far too general.

As for the traits held most desirable in mothers the largest number of both boys and girls checked "Being a good cook and housekeeper." Nothing could reveal more explicitly the historic rôle the mother is still expected to fill in the home. She is the comfort-maker, the bringer of

[25] Lynd, *op. cit.*, p. 524.

good cheer to the family members. Whether the majority of children in New York, Detroit, or San Francisco would have chosen that trait above all others would be interesting to know. The second desirable character in a mother, selected by a large group of youths, was "Always having time to read, talk, go on picnics, or play with her children." Here again the need of children for comradeship with their busy mothers is clearly evident. Somehow, in their crowded lives, fathers and mothers must set aside regular time to converse and play with their children if they are ever really to know them and give to them the fellowship they crave.

PARENTS AND THE NEW KNOWLEDGE OF CHILD NATURE

During the entire period of the twentieth century a continuous stream of scientific information regarding the nature and development of children based on observation, experiments, and tests, has been enriching our knowledge. Equally noteworthy has been the rapid spread of Child Study Associations and Parent Education groups, engaged in putting this knowledge to practical use. No middle-class parent to-day can honestly offer ignorance of his child's nature as an excuse for serious blunders in his upbringing, for the information and advice are at hand. It is earnestly to be hoped that before many years this knowledge and assistance may be as readily accessible to every wage-earning parent.

So earnestly have many mothers applied themselves to the study of their children that there is real danger that they may lose all happy spontaneity in their relationships with them. Again, in some cases, intelligent married couples, acquainted with modern theories of child-rearing, have shrunk from the responsibilities of parenthood, believing them too onerous and risky; while others with children have tended to exaggerate the importance of their mistakes and seriously to question their ability to bring up their offspring properly according to expert standards. Such refusals, doubts, and self-reproaches are an unfortunate by-product of the spread of scientific knowledge of childhood which, it is devoutly to be hoped, will prove to be ephemeral. Knowledge should be the servant of man, not his master, and it should never get in the way of smooth functioning in life situations. After all, a considerable proportion of children were reared with fair success before child psychology was ever heard of. It is highly important that parents should enjoy their children and taste to the full such rich rewards as parenthood may furnish. Humor and common-sense will prove excellent aids to young fathers and mothers in making their way through the mazes of child psychology, child hygiene, and child guidance and in getting pleasure from their children.

TOPICS FOR REPORTS

1. Study two or three of the cases described in the following book. In your judgment what are the fundamental causes of the child's maladjustment and difficulties?
   Maud E. Watson, *Children and their Parents* (F. S. Crofts and Co., New York, 1932).
2. Problems of Normal Children: Relation to the Home Environment.
   Josephine C. Foster and John E. Anderson, *The Young Child and his Parents* (University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1930), pp. 1–24.
3. Why Children Should Learn the Use of Money.
   Edwin A. Kirkpatrick, *The Use of Money* (The Bobbs Merrill Company, Indianapolis, 1915), Chs. I, IV, VIII, XIII.
   Sidonie M. Gruenberg, *Sons and Daughters* (Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1916), pp. 310–318.
   ———, *Your Child Today and Tomorrow* (J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, 1928), pp. 117–125.
4. Psycho-Social Aspects of Family Interaction.
   M. F. Nimkoff, *The Family* (Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1934), pp. 339–371.
5. Can Parents Change Themselves?
   Miriam Van Waters, *Parents on Probation* (New Republic, Inc., New York, 1927), pp. 31–56, 280–316.
6. Problems of Child Rearing in "Middletown."
   Robert S. Lynd and Helen Merrill Lynd, *Middletown* (Harcourt, Brace and Company, New York, 1929), pp. 131–152.

ADDITIONAL SELECTED READINGS

1. E. R. Mowrer, *The Family* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1932), Ch. X.
2. M. C. Elmer, *Family Adjustment and Social Change* (Long and Smith, New York, 1932), Ch. XI.
3. J. C. Flügel, *The Psycho-Analytic Study of the Family* (Psycho-Analytical Press, London and New York, 1921), Chs. III, V, XIV.
4. Ruth Reed, *The Modern Family* (F. S. Crofts and Co., New York, 1932), Chs. X, XI.
5. E. R. Groves, *The American Family*, Chs. XI, XXI.

CHAPTER XX

THE FAMILY IN THE FUTURE

TRANSITIONAL CHARACTER OF THE FAMILY

IT would reveal more audacity than wisdom to prophesy with confidence concerning the forms that marriage and family life will take on in the generations to come. Changes both in ideas and, to a somewhat less extent, in practices are proceeding so rapidly that outcomes cannot be clearly foreseen. Two generations ago the family was, perhaps, the most inflexible of all social institutions—the one that revealed the fewest changes since medieval times. To-day it is the most unstable, and probably the powerful current in the direction of change has not yet reached its crest.

This is only to express the commonplace that the family is in an acute stage of transition from standards and customs that no longer are adapted to twentieth-century conditions to a state where it will have achieved more satisfactory adjustments to the circumstances of modern life. It would be surprising if the family were not compelled to make fundamental changes in its controlling ideas and habits, since every other institution has been forced to undergo far-reaching alterations to bring it into harmony with social conditions that have been literally transformed during the last century and a half. Government, industry, science, and intellectual life have been largely made over since 1750. In America, frontier conditions have disappeared; a rural nation has become an urban nation; a highly mechanized and specialized industry is in the saddle; and science has literally revolutionized thought and living. It has attacked theology in its stronghold; has developed respect for facts and a sound method of discovering facts in millions of minds; has undermined loyalty to moral and religious codes, once unchallenged, by developing an insistent demand that their ideal standards be brought into accord with the realities of human nature and social life. Applied science has brought to laborers comforts and conveniences once unknown to princes and, through the medium of film plays, portraying an exaggerated luxuriousness of living, has created in the minds of many plain citizens an ardent desire for luxury by no means confined to the middle class.[1]

All these fundamental changes in the social and intellectual life of America—and of the world—were bound to react profoundly upon the family. With the disappearance of the frontier went the type of hard-working, adventurous, united family life that characterized it. With the rapid growth of cities and the influx of men and women from the farms to crowded centers of industry, there has sprung up a bewildering tangle of family problems and difficulties discussed in previous chapters. With the spread of factories and machines has gone the mechanization of life, followed by a human reaction against routine and a craving for excitement. Other consequences of our present economic system have been industrial insecurity, low wages for unskilled labor, and the work of mothers and children outside the home. In the midst of such a revolution in ways of living and of thinking, why should we expect that the family would escape change?

Owing to the barrage of criticisms emanating from judges of juvenile and domestic relations courts, social writers, and psychiatrists, the inefficiency of the contemporary family has been brought to the attention of most thoughtful people. It follows that, for the first time in social history, change in family ideas and customs is not only rapid but *conscious*. This is a more pregnant fact than may at first appear. For if intelligent folk are aware of the alterations taking place in the family, and of the need for such changes if this basic institution of society is to effect essential adjustments, they can *in some measure* control the character and direction of the adaptations. How far intelligence can direct and modify powerful social trends has long been a moot question. But to assert that knowledge and good-will can do nothing to control these movements is to accept a philosophy of fatalism and despair.

As might be expected, the rapidity of family changes, once brought to the attention of social groups, has evoked different attitudes and constructive proposals. A considerable body of conservative persons, jolted out of a comfortable complacency regarding the family, are filled with alarm and tend to fall back on sentiment, prejudice, and a censorious attitude toward everybody who advocates or participates in bringing about changes in family ideals and habits. This is the group that is vocal in deploring the good old times of our forbears, when families were unified and enduring, wives and mothers were devoted housekeepers and nurses of children, the children themselves were modest, respectful, and obedient to their parents, and decent people never mentioned subjects now the daily theme of table-talk. Far from realizing that, since the family is an organic part of society, changes in the social body demand responsive adaptations in the family organ, this group urges a return to the customs and standards of our forefathers. It sincerely believes that, if they would, progressive and radical thinkers who urge a new type of family life could turn their backs on "disrupting" ideas, stop dangerous experiments and preach a return to the safe and sane ways of the past. That serious writers and social workers favor progressive changes in family relations and organization is, in the opinion of this numerous reactionary class, mere wrong-headedness, which will result in sending the family institution, even now somewhat unseaworthy, upon the rocks. Mistaken as this group may be, lacking as it indubitably is in insight into the processes of social evolution, it must not be overlooked that it serves a useful purpose in holding back changes that might occur too fast to be solidly incorporated into the living organism of social life.

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[1] See Groves, *The Drifting Home*, pp. 201–202.

In sharp contrast to conservative opinion are the views of that increasing body of sophisticated men and women who readily accept the theory that the monogamic family has outlived its usefulness and should be decently interred without undue delay. A widespread skepticism regarding the personal and social value of the family permeates much of contemporary drama, fiction, and the press. Not rarely, by implication at least, the ideal of enduring monogamy is cleverly pilloried as the relic of a rigid and outgrown social system. More and more frequently the drama portrays experiments in freer sex relations, and tends to paint the husband or wife who clings to an ideal of lifelong marriage as at least faintly ridiculous. Most critics do not fail to point out that the monogamic family is chiefly responsible for the economic dependence and the resulting subordination of women, for the ownership and exploitation of children, for the development of an exaggerated respect for individual and family property, resulting in grave economic and social injustices, and, finally, for the propagation and maintenance of the theory that marriage *in and of itself* is a sacred institution ordained by God.

All these ideas, say the skeptics, are out-moded and should be relegated to the social scrap-heap. In this age, when the current has set powerfully away from an outworn social order toward a new and better one, every intelligent person should adopt a hospitable attitude toward social change, and should encourage rather than frown upon experiments in freer sex unions. Young people will inevitably try out the various expedients of trial marriage, companionate marriage, and no marriage, other than an agreement to live together so long as both mates are happy. This being the case, the radicals urge that it is idle for adults to oppose and condemn these experiments, especially as they have made something of a mess of marriage and family life themselves. Witness the ever rising rate of divorce, the obvious unhappiness of many married pairs who decide to remain together "for the sake of the children," the devastating effects of unwise family domination upon the personalities of little children, as revealed by psychiatrists. Furthermore the spokesmen of this "advanced" group openly challenge the doctrine that monogamy is "natural," and suggest that, if society should remove its powerful pressure and permit free sex experimentation, polygamy might be demonstrated to be both more natural and more conducive to happiness in the case of not a few men and women.

There remains a large body of reflective men and women who admit honestly and frankly the grave defects and deficiencies in the monogamic family as it exists in the present day, but who sincerely believe that progressive reforms can remedy, and indeed have already done much to remedy, the evils in marriage and family relations. This group does not fear change, because it knows that change is the mark of vitality; its fear is of stagnation, the sign manual of death. Therefore these progressives look forward with optimism and faith to continuous, gradual modifications in the organization of the family, in its controlling ideals and practices, such as will rid it of the last relics of patriarchalism. When this is accomplished, as they believe it will be, they look forward to a new type of family, in which freedom and mutual love and *respect for the personality of each member* shall unite to furnish the most wholesome conditions for personal growth. Not the elimination of the family, but its reform, is the slogan of the liberals.

In the eyes of the skeptics, the faith of the progressive group in the survival of the family rests on a precarious support of sentiment and conservatism, with little solid evidence to serve as a foundation. Yet an impartial examination of the facts justifies us in a considerable degree of confidence in the persistence of the monogamic family. In the first place, anthropology shows it to be one of the earliest of human institutions, growing out of real human needs. Neither monogamy nor the family *originated* in coercive social pressure; rather, they developed as the best ways to meet the urgent instinct of sex, on the one hand, and the utter need of helpless infants on the other. It is not reasonable to suppose that an institution that has survived for thousands of years, and has more or less successfully adjusted itself to the demands of a changing civilization, will surrender to the first onslaught of hostile criticism or will break up because of experiments in new forms of sex union. As suggested above, the attacks in the past upon government, organized religion, and accepted knowledge have been even more powerful than any yet launched against the family. Yet the former institutions are as strong to-day as ever, because they serve basic needs of mankind and because they have proved reasonably responsive to criticism and organized efforts for reform. Such, in the considered judgment of the writer, will prove true of the family. In so far as it shows flexibility and capacity to meet the novel conditions of social life in the twentieth century, so far will it reveal a vitality that ensures its survival.

Examples are not lacking of capacity for adaptation on the part of the family during the last century. Although the emancipation of women from their subordination in the patriarchal family has been tardy, it has been finally effected in most civilized states. The life of a married woman to-day, even with its handicaps, is vastly more free than that of her sisters a century ago; her intellectual horizon is (or may be) as broad as the universe; her property and wages are her own. Likewise the lives of children, once even more under subjection than those of their mothers, have been transformed. The law protects the small boy and girl from cruelty, from too grave economic exploitation, from ignorance, from parental neglect. Although any social system which breeds and maintains poverty cannot give to children important "natural rights," yet the lot of most children is distinctly better than in past centuries; and, in the case of many, it is enormously improved. Among educated people, children are no longer snubbed and suppressed, regarded as "limbs of Satan" for exhibiting the faults and weaknesses of childhood, harshly reproved and even cruelly punished for their misconduct. A new spirit of comradeship, of understanding and, above all, of mutual confidence, is sweetening the relationships of many parents and children—a spirit rare indeed in the authoritarian atmosphere of the patriarchal family of the past.

There is another ground for faith in the survival of the family which is worthy of serious consideration. What institution could take the place of the family should it decline and disappear? The critics who would destroy the last relics of this "outworn institution" and inaugurate a régime of sex freedom are strongest when they point out the imperfections and deficiencies of the family, weakest when they sketch a plan for getting along without it. The serious student of family evolution cannot fail to be impressed with its services, not alone to society, but to the individual. It has furnished an abiding place for men and women and children apart from the excitements, the disappointments, the bitter griefs and frustrations of life—a quiet retreat where each member was understood and loved in spite of everything. In the family, if anywhere, the human being might find sympathy and joy and comfort. This is not to say that all families have been spiritual refuges for their members, but only that many have so proved themselves, and that apparently no other social institution is equipped to satisfy the human craving for love and understanding.

The services of the family to infancy, to growing children, and to adolescent youths are too obvious to need more than passing mention. With all its faults, the family has provided an indispensable nursery and school for the young. It has furnished a *permanent* home for children (who greatly need stability of life) where they might be nurtured with love, with some degree of understanding of their needs as individuals, with pride in their achievements and regret at their failures.

What will happen if sex relationships should ever come to be looked upon as temporary? Probably children would be the chief sufferers. No sooner would they begin to send roots down into home life than these would be torn up and they would be required to adjust to a new household and a new step-parent. There would be little stability and continuity in the lives of such children—two conditions vitally essential for peaceful growth and maturing. Parents who thus sacrificed their children, by depriving them of the circumstances best assuring their growth, would in reality be demanding the free development of personality for themselves while denying it to their offspring.

Moreover, temporary sex unions, readily dissolved when not wholly satisfying, would render it impossible for the partners to grow through patience and insight into a finer comradeship. Those who have once known the love and fellowship that are the reward of mutual concessions and mutual forbearance esteem them as far more precious than the restless fever of romantic passion—infinitely more satisfying to the mind and heart. This does not mean that passion does not persist in such unions, but only that it is less urgent and masterful. As brought out in a previous chapter, the whole psychology of the man and woman who enter into a free sex relationship with the understanding that it can be ended at will is antithetical to that of the pair who desire to make their union lifelong. In the former case, the demand is insistent that the relationship remain romantically appealing and unfailingly stimulating.

> "Oh think not I am faithful to a vow!
>
> . . . .
>
> Were you not lovely I would leave you now:
> After the feet of beauty fly my own." [2]

How can such an attitude, all-demanding and impatient of every quality in the beloved which fails to meet exacting standards, ever make possible a successful marriage? Most of the precious things of life are bought with a price and one of the most rare—loving, understanding comradeship in marriage—exacts the costly price of self-control, willingness to concede, sometimes even to suffer, that many lovers have not the moral capital to pay.

REFORMS NECESSARY IF THE FAMILY IS TO FUNCTION SUCCESSFULLY IN MODERN LIFE

Although improvement in the social environment of the home and the enactment of much-needed legislation cannot of themselves assure the successful functioning of the family, they can provide those wholesome conditions without which there can be scant assurance of family stability, freedom, and happiness. Modern government has gone far toward acceptance of the theory that the state exists chiefly to promote social well-being and happiness. Many reflective minds are asking whether the state is not inevitably moving toward a more truly socialized order in which regard for the welfare of its citizens will constitute one of the primary motives of government. Therefore, it seems timely to ask what is involved in acceptance of the spirit and purpose of such a society. In the case of marriage and the family, it would mean that the state would actively concern itself in the improvement of these institutions in at least three ways—by means of legislation, economic reforms, and social and educational aids. A brief consideration of each type of assistance may be worth while.

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[2] Edna St. Vincent Millay, *A Few Figs from Thistles* (Harper & Brothers, New York, 1923), Sonnet III.

Legislative Reforms.

On the legal side, it is to be hoped that governments in the future will enact laws eliminating certain of the worst conditions that threaten marriage at present. In 1932 twenty-four of these United States recognized so-called "common-law marriages" as valid. Needless to say, irregular, perhaps unwitnessed, marriage arrangements such as these make possible easy repudiation of all family responsibilities. Common-law marriages are a relic of the family individualism of the medieval barbarian tribes, and should be declared invalid by statute in every State which has not taken such action.

Another evil that should and will be righted is that of child marriages. The valuable study of *Child Marriages* by Richmond and Hall, published in 1925, points out that in fourteen States, the minimum age of marriage for girls is twelve years; [3] in nine States, fourteen years; in eight States, fifteen years; in seventeen States, sixteen years.[4] This means that, with the consent of the parents, which apparently can be secured with astonishing ease, little girls between twelve and sixteen years of age may assume the responsibilities of marriage and founding a family in all the States of the Union save one—New Hampshire, which has fixed a minimum marriage age, for girls, of eighteen years. According to the estimate of Richmond and Hall, there are about 343,000 women in the country who began their married life as children during the last thirty-six years. This is nothing short of astounding in an age when interest in and knowledge about questions of social well-being are probably more general than in any previous period of history. Apparently a thoroughgoing education of public opinion is essential before legislative reforms can be effected.

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[3] In 1932 the states permitting marriage at this age had been reduced to ten.

[4] Mary E. Richmond and F. S. Hall, *Child Marriages* (Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1925), p. 45.

Eugenic marriage laws, i.e., legislation designed to improve the stock by preventing the transmission of physical and mental diseases, have been powerfully advocated but have not yet won over public opinion. In 1925, seven States had enacted laws requiring that male applicants for a marriage license should secure a medical certificate declaring them free from any venereal disease.[5] Because of the expense and time involved in giving thorough laboratory tests to determine the presence of syphilis, the operation of these laws has been difficult and imperfect. Especially has controversy centered about the working of Wisconsin's law, passed in 1913. In a valuable study of the results achieved by the law, Hall quotes the opinions of various physicians, most of these to the effect that, although the statute has almost certainly not prevented the marriage of some men suffering from syphilis in an active or inactive form, it has proved of very great value in educating popular opinion in the State. An increasing number of men, knowing that they are infected, either postpone their marriages or put marriage definitely behind them until they are cured. Probably further experience in the operation of the law will convince these seven pioneer States and others that will, it may be hoped, follow in their footsteps, that a higher fee must be granted to the examining physician for making exacting tests, this fee to be paid by the State in cases where it is beyond the means of the applicant.

Another form of eugenic law sponsored by eugenists to-day is that concerned with sterilization of the unfit—of those persons who, by every known test, are physically or mentally unsound. These persons would be likely to have an abnormal number of children, unhealthy in body or mind, and thus incapacitated to meet the ordinary demands of modern life. Very few advocates of *compulsory* sterilization to eliminate unhealthy stocks can be mustered at present. Although this method is espoused by a few eugenists, public opinion is far from sanctioning it as a wholesale device. However, voluntary sterilization of criminal and mentally defective types, or even occasional compulsory sterilization where it is clearly necessary, will no doubt continue and increase. The difficulty in committing States to this policy lies in the fact that the laws of heredity with respect to the inheritance of mental and physical defects are by no means thoroughly established and generally accepted. Until they are, popular opinion will not support legislation designed to weed out defective stocks by compulsory operations for eugenical sterilization. Nevertheless education can do much to awaken public sentiment to the importance of eugenics as a factor in successful marriages. Likewise education can dispose defective persons to submit to voluntary sterilization in cases where competent physicians and psychiatrists are agreed that such persons should not have offspring.

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[5] These states are Alabama, North Carolina, Indiana, North Dakota, Oregon, Wyoming and Wisconsin.

Social experience does not justify great confidence in legislation as a means of improving family welfare. Yet it seems not unreasonable to believe that the prohibition of common-law marriages and child marriages would at least eliminate two grave evils that threaten family life at present, while the education of the mass of men and women in certain fundamental eugenical ideas and practices would tend appreciably to improve the human stock, even if such a policy did not accomplish all that has been claimed for it by enthusiastic eugenists.

Economic Reforms.

A fully socialized society would not stop with the enactment of a few laws righting grave abuses. It would attack the problem of poverty with its full resources of scientific knowledge and good-will. To this evil in our midst may be traced in large measure an appalling number of the ills from which the families of the laboring, and not rarely the small-salaried, classes are suffering. As indicated in previous chapters, poverty, with its twin brother, ignorance, must bear heavy responsibility for the existence in our midst of ugly, unsanitary tenements, bad home conditions, juvenile crime and delinquency, family desertion, prostitution, and child labor. If a society should grow up in the future which put the health, happiness and welfare of its members *above every other end,* the present economic system would be transformed. In such a society everyone would work, so far as possible, at tasks adapted to his capacities and individual aptitudes. Payment for that labor—were it manual or mental—would be sufficient to secure decent, comfortable homes for every family, and to drive fear of pauperism from the door, especially if the ban upon the spread of sound contraceptive information were removed. Indeed the State would make the housing problem its own, and, recognizing that society has no right to expect that healthy, intelligent, socially-minded children should come from dark, overcrowded homes, would see to it that these physical and moral pesthouses were replaced by attractive, sanitary dwelling places. If to the reader this plan seems unduly Utopian or "socialistic," he should recall that several European countries—England, France, Belgium, and Holland, to mention a few—have already attacked the problem of the housing of their laborers with a will. At present there are very few unsanitary tenements in Holland, and in a decade there will be none in England,[6] if the good work keeps up.

A more socialized society would also concern itself with providing for young people such economic opportunities as would make early marriage a sane possibility, not a foolish risk. It would attack the economic props of prostitution, and by securing to young workers a wage that makes life worth living would remove at least one inducement to vice—the longing of young women for a few of the pleasures and pretty things with which the lives of the privileged seem to abound. It is not the judgment of the author that lax sex relations will disappear with the removal of poverty. But it seems reasonably certain that the barter of their bodies by ill-paid girls and women in return for good times, money, and attractive clothes will become relatively rare, as is the case in Soviet Russia, when these young persons earn sufficient wages to supply a reasonable amount of material goods and recreational pleasure for themselves.

Social Reforms.

But a humane society will not have completed its task of promoting individual and family well-being even when it has brought about economic reforms. There still remains the great work of planning and putting into operation constructive educational and social programs, definitely designed to raise the level of family life and to promote the health and efficiency of family members. Before such plans can be conceived, however, society will be forced to abandon a heavy luggage of old ideas and customs regarding the nature and sphere of women, the limited functions of the state and the importance of leaving to individual initiative a large area of vital human concerns. When once society has outgrown these age-old notions, it can attack with an open mind certain questions of far-reaching importance to family life. In the first place, social acceptance of complete sex equality, not merely theoretical but practical acceptance, would mean social coöperation in meeting the crucial problem of married women—how to harmonize marriage and parenthood with gainful employment. Perhaps, in the future, towns and cities will be almost as much concerned in helping the working mother solve practical questions of food preparation, household management, and child care as they are beginning to be in the conservation of child health. Who knows but the next generation will have community kitchens; apartment house and neighborhood nurseries, managed by experts in child care; coöperative or public house-cleaning service, all furnished at moderate cost to mothers who can give their best service to society outside the home?

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[6] The estimate of Edith Elmer Wood, expert on housing, made to the author.

Although the children of gainfully employed women will not receive so large a part of their mother's attention and physical care as in past generations, they may, nevertheless, be well nurtured by trained child nurses, and start their education under wholesome and happy conditions in a nursery school. No normal mother or father will fail to take deep interest in his or her children, or to seek every opportunity to stimulate and guide their developing minds and characters. More and more, as the child grows older, the mother will find occasions to be companionable with him (or her), to observe carefully his individual traits and aptitudes and to establish between herself and her child that rare spirit of mutual confidence which must exist if she is to be a guide and help in his formative years. Recently a little girl whose mother is a professional woman was naming her best friends to a visitor. Among them was her mother. When the caller expressed mild surprise at this inclusion of the mother among loved companions, the little girl replied: "Oh, yes, she is one of my best friends." The gainfully employed mother who is a comrade to her children and has their confidence has surely not failed as a parent.

In the years to come, married women will probably increasingly contribute from their earnings to the family income. This will mean that earlier marriage will be possible for the salaried middle class in which the marriage rate is relatively low. A man will not hesitate for years to ask the woman he loves to marry him if he knows that she expects to contribute her share to the maintenance of their common home and children. Then will disappear our present inequitable situation, which no doubt leads heavily burdened professional men seriously to raise the question whether the economic burden is fairly apportioned between husband and wife. Society should be greatly benefited by the services of a growing body of trained women, married and unmarried, whose most valuable contributions will probably be made in those fields of economic and social life that are most concerned with human welfare. When the majority of women are engaged in gainful work, the semi-parasitism of a number of married women at present.will inevitably meet with increasing social disapproval. A prominent social investigator recently declared in a college address that parasitic women should be compelled by the State to go to work. Probably such action will be long deferred, if indeed it is ever undertaken. But that such a policy should have been publicly advocated seems to the writer a straw showing which way the wind blows. Idle married women, who have no regular employment within the home or outside it, and who are content to be maintained in indolent comfort by prosperous husbands will more and more fall under a social ban.

Provision of recreational facilities in convenient localities to meet the need for sports and relaxation of the masses of our industrialized society will proceed apace and will, in course of time, result in ample playground space for all children and adults, within reach of their homes. This goal is already being reached in New York City. In the years to come, teachers of organized games and sports, supported from public funds, may vie in importance with teachers of grammar and history. The enormous benefits, both to the family and to society, of adequate provision for health-building, out-of-door recreation can hardly be exaggerated. A recent study of one of the most troublesome boy-gangs in Brooklyn led to a report in which the collaborators united in the opinion that the total lack of play space for these boys, other than the street and the docks, was the most important factor in their growing lawlessness. The fathers of these boys were mostly stevedores, who frequently slept in the daytime, and the boys were told to go out and keep away from the house in order to secure unbroken sleep to their fathers.

Not only will society in the future provide ample play space for youth, but it will make the supervision of commercialized amusements its serious concern. Dance halls, cheap movies and cabarets, steamboats, amusement parks and other forms of recreation will be required to conform to standards of decency or close up, and the youth that resort to these places will be more carefully supervised and protected from powerful temptations to vice. The cities and towns of America may even enter into competition with commercial amusement places and furnish to youth satisfying outlets for their love of pleasure and adventure which are free from vulgarity and vicious suggestions.

On the educational side there is much for a socially-minded society to do, even though much has already been attempted. Probably the laws against giving contraceptive knowledge, either privately by physicians or in clinics under public supervision, will break down before many years. Maternity centers in the next generation will be greatly multiplied and will offer to expectant and nursing mothers not only expert prenatal and postnatal care, but educational assistance in the nurture and guidance of their children which will be available to *every mother* who is in need of it. Many maternity centers will probably, like the East Harlem center in New York, see fit to engage in educational campaigns throughout a whole district, to interest foreign-born and native mothers in the maternity center and in the various forms of assistance which it offers them. Such a crusade in the East Harlem center, over a period of four years, resulted in educating fully four fifths of the mothers to give up recourse to ignorant midwives and to make increasing use of the valuable facilities of the center. In the years ahead, maternity centers, public health nursing associations, behavior clinics, public schools, and universities will tend in ever-growing numbers to employ the services of mental hygienists in order to discover in time evidences of mental strain and abnormality in children and youths. So far as possible, they will redirect these tendencies and forestall grave unhappiness and maladjustment in the lives of the victims of these disorders and in the families which they may establish in the future.

In the family of the future, the writer has the optimism to believe that both father and mother will be *educated parents,* availing themselves of the opportunities furnished by the nursery school and by public schools of parenthood to become wiser companions and guides of their children from infancy. The parents of the coming generations will learn how to avoid crippling or stunting their offspring by unwise parental action and how to hold in check their own selfish demands for the exclusive devotion of their boys and girls. In this new and enlightened parenthood, the father will share equally with the mother. Who can tell how much greater happiness and liberation of power may not be the assets of the rising generation when parents have been set free by knowledge from ancient errors!

EXPERIMENTS IN NEW FORMS OF MARRIAGE AND SEX UNIONS

In any period of profound transition from an old order to a new, there is bound to be exploring, experimenting and radical theorizing. There can be no renaissance in thought or institutional life without these accompaniments. History shows that social change is always attended by expression of opinions and by experiments in new ways of living that seem radical and even dangerous to thoughtful men and women. Sometimes these novel ideas and customs are incorporated into the life of society and come to be accepted as commonplaces. Witness the widespread freedom of thought and of conscience that intellectual "radicals" have brought about, the universal franchise rights that social leaders have fought to realize, the just claims that organized labor has made good in its protracted struggle for higher wages and better working conditions. On the other hand, history also bears witness to not a few movements designed to overthrow or radically alter old institutions and thought systems which did not entirely accomplish the ends in view. Voltaire and the young atheists in the ardent group of French Encyclopedists did not succeed in destroying the Church—*"L'Infame"*—but they did change public opinion by making it more tolerant and humane with regard to religious questions. Soviet Russia has not abolished the family; it has only eased the rigid bonds in which it was held by the Orthodox Church. In the U.S.S.R. all unions of men and women other than purely temporary sex relationships are held to be marriages, whether registered or not, and parents are held strictly responsible for the support and nurture of children. Although divorce is made easy, signs are not lacking that the Soviet authorities are tightening up the laws to prevent "fly-by-night" unions where the father deserts, leaving the mother to support the offspring. Radical changes in public opinion and practice have not destroyed the family in the Soviet Union; they have only made of it a freer institution based on mutual affection and consent rather than harsh compulsion.

It seems reasonable to believe that, despite a heavy fire of criticism leveled against modern marriage, especially in English-speaking and Scandinavian lands, despite the experiments in freer sex relations that are unquestionably going on, the monogamic family will survive. Yet even on this point it is well not to be overconfident. In the words of the liberal pastor of the Community Church of New York:

> Marriage as we know it in our part of the world—namely the monogamic relation between men and women—is regarded as the fixed and final, indeed, as the only thinkable solution of the problem of the sexes. What is the use of discussing what is already settled for good and all? But *is* it settled for good and all? . . . at whatever hazard of misunderstanding at this time I want to lay down the proposition that no question is ever settled, no institution finally and irrevocably established. . . . The changes may not be great; they may never be made at all. But the way must always be wide open for experimentation. Not otherwise can progress be assured.[7]

The way is partly open to-day for experimentation, and some men and women are availing themselves of the opportunity. Society will probably be more familiar in the future with companionate marriages, "trial marriages" and other forms of tentative exploration into the field of freer sex relations. Companionate unions have in all probability come to stay. The marriage of men and women for companionship and with the definite intention of preventing the birth of offspring, already far from rare, will doubtless become more common. As Professor Groves predicts, this type of marriage, allowing as it does for freer comradeship, for the joys of love and home without their responsibilities, will persist, at least until certain family evils are righted, and will prove an aggressive rival of the family with children.[8]

To be sure, some of these companionate unions will be transformed into typical marriages, voluntarily or involuntarily, by the advent of a child, and in such cases parents may develop as strong an affection for their children as if they had formed no initial purpose to remain childless. But many companionates will end as they began—childless marriages. Probably Groves is right when he declares that such unions would have been formed ages ago by men and women who did not desire offspring had they known how to prevent their conception.

What will be the effect of the companionate upon the conventional family? Who can say that it may not prove a stimulus to the removal of antiquated ideas and handicaps that stand in the way of the happiness and successful functioning of the family with children? Challenged by a successful competitor for the favor of men and women, the historic family of parents and children may be impelled to set its house in order, to remove causes of friction and to lift ancient burdens from the shoulders of fathers, mothers and children.

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[7] *Birth Control Review,* May, 1927, p. 135.

[8] Groves, *The Drifting Home,* pp. 212–216.

On the other hand it is doubtful whether society will ever place the stamp of its approval upon companionate marriage, since, from the biological point of view, it is a failure. Sociologists tell us that at least three births are required to replace each married pair. This is true despite a steadily falling death rate; for not all children, under the best conditions, grow to maturity and perpetuate themselves, and not all marry. Since companionate marriage is not self-perpetuating, it seems bound to be restricted in every age to a minority of persons who have good reasons for not desiring children and to those individualists who care less for the experience of parenthood than for so-called "self-expression."

Not much is known of the extent to which experiments in so-called "trial marriages" have gone. These relationships, entered into with no formalities, are by their nature private. The partners concerned desire to "try out" living together and to discover whether they are happily mated, not only sexually but psychologically. "It is these psychic necessities," says Dr. Beatrice Hinkle, "which have put the old marriage relation out of joint." [9] And it is the difficulties that two individualized persons encounter in effecting happy adjustments to each other—especially sexual adjustments—which are primarily responsible for the emergence of the idea of trial marriage. Such relationships can be easily dissolved if they prove unsuccessful and if there are no children. If they remain happy under the acid test of prolonged daily association, some at least of these irregular matings may result in permanent legal marriages. Long ago Elsie Clews Parsons pointed out to an indignant and outraged society that, since monogamous marriage seems best fitted to promote health and intellectual and emotional development in individuals, and since such marriages are long delayed because of economic circumstances, it might be well, in order to avoid the evil of prostitution, which is an accompaniment of delayed unions, to encourage early trial marriage. In this much vilified proposal, Mrs. Parsons was by no

[9] Hinkle, "Changing Marriage," in *Survey Graphic*, December, 1926, p. 289.

means suggesting that society sanction sexual license, for she expressly stated that the relation should "be entered into with a view to permanency," but with the privilege of ending it if it were unhappy. *If no offspring were born,* such unions should not, in her opinion, meet with sharp public condemnation.[10]

On the basis of his long and intimate experience with the boys and girls of Denver, among whom, he believes, there is far more loose sexual commerce than ever comes to light, Judge Lindsey is inclined to believe that if public opinion could be brought to tolerate some form of "companionate marriage," permitting youths "a free, normal and decent exercise of their sexual cravings," much secret and unlovely sexual intercourse would be done away with. Birth control knowledge may, he thinks, result in two kinds of marriage contracts, the one permitting the birth of children and encouraging permanent marriage, and the other prohibiting conception and permitting only cohabitation. The latter unions might easily be dissolved if they proved unhappy. The honest realism of Judge Lindsey has met with a storm of hostile criticism, indicating that society is not yet ready to face with frankness the actual sexual laxity that exists in its midst. In course of time, when public opinion is more soundly informed, it may be brought to sanction companionate marriage and divorce by mutual consent *in the interest of a finer sexual morality*. But such a revolution in popular thinking lies in all probability far in the future.

The greatest hope for the improvement of marriage and family life rests upon the spread of enlightenment and a finer idealism in regard to sex relations and functions. The American people have long been distinguished for their passionate faith in the possibilities of popular education. Yet they have never brought that faith to bear upon one of the most critical of all social problems—how to make marriage and home life satisfying and developing. Although the educated class is gradually being converted to the belief that harmonious adjustments within marriage and the family cannot be brought about without sound, scientific education, infused with idealism, average men and women remain in Egyptian darkness regarding this social need. A large number of unsuccessful marriages are due, if we may believe the psychiatrists and physicians, to sexual incompatibilities, a considerable proportion of which could have been prevented by the right kind of sex education from the earliest years to adult life. When shall we awaken as a people to the urgent importance of this instruction, not alone to give information when it is needed and to establish hygienic sex habits but to prevent those sex repressions and warped ideas which are so inimical to happy marriage?

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[10] Parsons, *The Family* (G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1906), pp. 348–349.

If knowledge and practical idealism unite in facing squarely the many inadequacies of the present-day family, its suppressions of personal freedom, its conflicts and unhappiness, there will emerge in the generations to come a finer, more satisfying, and therefore more enduring family life than is at all general to-day. This family of the future may combine the unity and permanence of the old-time family with sympathetic comradeship and deep emotional satisfactions that give joy to life and in which too often the family relations of the past were lacking. Not authority but comprehending love will prove the cement of the family that is to be.

TOPICS FOR REPORTS

1. F. H. Allport, "Must We Scrap the Family?" *Harper's Magazine,* No. 962, July, 1930.
2. Legislation and Education as Factors in Reconstructing the Family. George E. Howard, *History of Matrimonial Institutions* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1904), Vol. III, pp. 201–259.
3. Companionate Marriage: A Critical Analysis.
   Judge Ben B. Lindsey and Wainwright Evans, *Companionate Marriage* (Boni and Liveright, New York, 1927), Chs. VII, VIII, IX.
4. A Critical Consideration of the Theory of "Free Love."
   Maude Royden, *Sex and Common Sense* (G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1922), Ch. III.
5. Our Need for an Experimental Moral Faith.
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